



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

Church Rushes To Set Up Winter Shelter For Gay Youth Homeless Would Be Ferried to Noe Valley From the Castro

By Mark Robinson

With the rainy season at hand, a Noe Valley pastor and his congregation are scrambling to create a city-funded shelter for homeless gay youth by the middle of December.

The effort is backed by mayoral candidate Tom Ammiano, who is shepherding the proposal through the city bureaucracy.

The push to open the 15-bed shelter at the Golden Gate Metropolitan Community Church at 27th and Church streets came in early November after a citizens' committee in the Castro rejected a proposal for a similar shelter at 2500 Market St.

The Noe Valley plan, which was presented to a handful of residents and supporters at a Nov. 16 meeting at the church, envisions homeless people between the ages of 18 and 23 being transported by van from the Castro to the Noe Valley church each evening at 9:30. They would spend the night in the church, have breakfast there, and then be driven back to the Castro at 9:00 the next morning. Organizers hope the shelter will operate until May.

"We're trying to break the cycle of drugs, alcohol, and prostitution," Rev. Jim Mitulski told the dozen or so residents who attended the Nov. 16 meeting. "We want to have them in a wholesome environment. This is the kind of neighborhood we want to integrate them into."



The church next to Mia's Flowers on Church Street wants to use its building as an overnight shelter for homeless gay youth from December to May. Photo by Charles Kennard

Without the shelter, Mitulski said, the youth would spend the winter months sleeping in doorways, alleys, and parks in the Castro and around the city. Or they might seek refuge in a large, anonymous homeless shelter, where they could be harassed or assaulted, he said.

Mitulski, senior pastor of the Castro branch of the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) and interim pastor of the small Noe Valley congregation, acknowledged that the shelter will be able to serve only a tiny portion of the estimated 2,000 young gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered homeless youth in the city. But space for 15 beds is better than nothing, he said. "Warehousing them in the Tenderloin is not a good idea."

He added that the shelter will not turn away homeless youth who are not gay, but that its main target is the gay population, which in his eyes is particularly at risk.

Neighbors who attended the meeting, or who learned about the shelter later, said the proposal raises concerns about noise, security, and crime. The activities at the small church—religious services, 12-step meetings, deliveries—already cause traffic, trash, loitering, and other problems, said Enrique Ovando, whose house fronts the church building at 1508 Church St.

"I have enough trouble dealing with what goes on now," Ovando told Mitulski during the meeting. "Don't move forward on this shelter plan until these problems are resolved."

Ovando also voiced concerns about the prospective clients of the shelter, saying that there was little organizers could do to keep the people who slept there inside the church building. The prospect of homeless youth lingering outside the shelter, he said, made him worry for the safety of his children, who are 2 and 4. "You can't control the activities of these people," he said. "If they want to leave, they'll leave."

Mitulski said it was true that the overnight clients couldn't be forced to stay put. But he noted that the shelter plan calls for pre-screening them before they board vans in the Castro. They will be told they are to stay inside the church at all times, and since they will be looking for a place

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City Says Y2K Should Be A Breeze

But Watch Out for New Year's Eve

By Alex Nicole Leviton

After all the hype about Y2K, you'd think the city would be fretting over the computer chaos that might be unleashed at 12:01 on Jan. 1, 2000.

But with the biggest New Year's Eve celebration in a thousand years approaching, the city's chief concern is not power failures or water shortages caused by the bug. It's the mix of booze and partying—and the buggy behavior that's likely to occur in "I'm wacky and proud" San Francisco.

For this reason, the city's emergency workers have adopted a policy of "zero tolerance for idiotic behavior," says Lucien Canton, director of the Mayor's Office of Emergency Services. (And that means you too, Noe Valleyans!)

As for Y2K, Canton confidently states, "We are not expecting any disasters whatsoever." However, just in case, his department has developed citywide contingency plans for all doomsday scenarios.

Canton assures us that every conceivable Y2K glitch has been tested and retested. Worried about hospitals or police stations losing power? All critical facilities have emergency generators that will kick in immediately. How about power outages causing Muni to break down? Between 8:30 and 9 p.m. on Dec. 31, Muni will switch over to diesel buses. (This also makes sense in light of New Year's revelry: the diesel buses are easier to reroute and maneuver in a crowd.)

What about crowd control downtown? Virtually all emergency service personnel—including police officers, firefighters, Office of Emergency Services (OES) employees, and many volunteers—will be on duty that night, Canton says.

Still, a good way to usher in the millennium is to stay home and sip cham-

Ways to Turn Over a New Leaf in the Next Millennium

By Steve Steinberg

Well, it's New Year's again. Time for those perennial and sometimes pesky resolutions. This year it's a little different, though. Your New Year's resolutions must not only be for the upcoming year, but for the new century and the new millennium as well!

To help you with this daunting task, the *Voice* asked various professionals in Noe Valley what they thought was the wisest New Year's resolution, especially for the year 2000. Here are some of their replies:

"Any resolution that extends one's life is a good one," says Jonathen Gray, a local psychotherapist who specializes in helping people with addiction problems. He notes that a change that will improve your life expectancy, such as quitting smoking or drinking, often coincides with

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Red Rags in the Sunset

Still pounding at our keyboards and clutching our mice during these last November nights of 1999, this editorship is limping toward the port of holiday vacation—where the promised delight of smooth water waits, and where there's no deadline for departure.

Our 60-ton, er, -page vessel contains hundreds of advertisements (some of them in the color red) and thousands of words that you've trusted us to carry to those information-hungry others around the world via Internet and over the hill via Misha. Your expectations and support are what keep us going through storm and dead calm. Thanks, mates.

Now you won't miss us too much if we take liberty for the month of December? We'll return to prepare for another year-long cruise in January. So get your class ads, photos, and letters to us by Jan. 15; display ads by Jan. 21. With that we'll scrape off the barnacles and set you up with a fine February 2000 issue. Deal?

—Cap'n Jack, Admiral Sal, and crew



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Photo by Beverly Tharp

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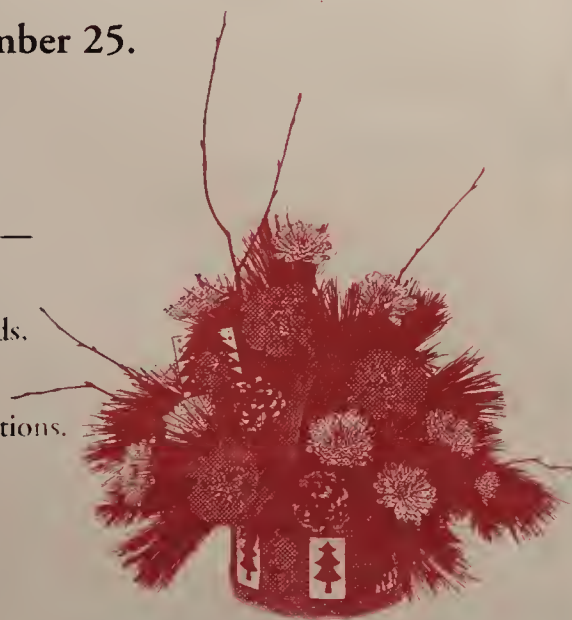
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LETTERS 33¢

More Growling Over Dogs at Upper Noe

What If People Did the Pooping?
Editor:

There was no attack on dog owners or dogs in my letter in the October Voice. I only stated the facts. What are the facts?

First, off-leash use of the field at Upper Noe Rec Center is illegal. The posted signs state "Keep Dogs on Leash." Some people have chosen to ignore the signs. This law may be viewed by some as a minor law, but it is up to all of us to do our part to keep society humming along by accepting that minor laws have meaning. Obeying the leash law is a social agreement, like not littering or not jaywalking or giving up the front seats on the Muni to a disabled or elderly person. We should not need a police officer or a rec center director or another citizen to remind us that public athletic fields, paid for by all taxpayers, were never intended to be used for dog recreation or as a dog toilet.

Second, because people are breaking the law (not living up to the social agreement), the field has deteriorated. Dogs enjoy digging, especially after they have gone to the bathroom. Their instinct makes them want to "clean up." Yes, we've had two very rainy winters. In fact, little signs were put up that read "Field Closed." The field was a mess from the weather, but there were also lots of off-leash dogs on the field, in spite of the signs and the leash law. The reason there was no baseball at Upper Noe during the spring of 1998 was that so many dogs had torn up the field, digging it up and running on it when it was saturated. That is also the reason the field was closed this spring for repairs.

Third, because people are breaking the law (not living up to the social agreement), the field is unhealthy. Let's be gross, but honest. If people were shitting and peeing on the field, the Health Department would close the field. Even if people did this and cleaned up after themselves—and how do you clean up urine and shit residue?—the field would be closed. Honestly, what is the difference between this outrageous scenario and what happens on the field right now with all the off-leash dogs? Think about it!

Fourth, the city has stated that it tried allowing dogs off-leash at certain times at other athletic fields, but it didn't work. Talk to the staff at Eureka Valley Rec Center. *It would be nice* if it had worked there, just as *it would be nice* if it could work at Upper Noe. *But it didn't and it can't.* Why can't it? Because this sort of use is basically what is already going on at Upper Noe. The bulk of the illegal off-leash use occurs before and after work, and the traffic has left the field in poor condition.

Lastly, the city is going to spend \$50,000 to renovate the field and the ball diamond as part of the Mayor's Renaissance Park Program. Fifty thousand dollars is a lot of taxpayers' money, but the city has decided that the renovation of the field is an important improvement. As a compromise to the illegal off-leash use (remember the social agreement), the city is planning a separate fenced-off dog run on the athletic field. This is extremely fair. If some people think the dog run proposed in October by Joel Robinson and his staff is too small, they can go to Noe Courts. It is just a short neighborhood walk away.

Again, this is NOT an attack on dogs and dog owners. It is just the facts.

Georgia Schuttish
Duncan Street

Park Safer at Night with Dogs

Editor:

I am not a dog owner, but I take issue with Georgia Schuttish's letter concern-

ing off-leash dogs at Day Street Park [the Upper Noe field]. I have lived in Noe Valley for 15 years, and this park has never been an ideal playground for children. The problem isn't the dogs but the field itself. It doesn't drain properly and in the winter it is a swamp. In the summer there is a residue of chemicals and fish fertilizer on the grass which would not be conducive to the Easter egg hunts or parachute games that Georgia mentioned. Another problem is that the park isn't safe, not just for children but for anybody.

I know of a company who used to play baseball there, but when one of their employees was smashed over the head by a gang member, they never went back. There is also evidence of drug-dealing at the park. Along with the lime and fish fertilizer, there are hypodermic needles and broken glass in the grass.

Since Day Street Park is the only green space within walking distance of my house, I go there often. But I go with a dog that I borrow for companionship and safety. The presence of dogs and their owners has improved the atmosphere in the park in recent years, and now I don't feel afraid after dark.

I also feel that the dog owners have compromised by agreeing to limited hours at the park—before 9 a.m. and after 6 p.m. There are very few athletic events during those times. Instead of blaming dogs, let's work together to make the park a safe place for all of us to enjoy.

Victoria Lewis
Sanchez Street



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Church Moves to Open Gay Youth Shelter in Noe

Continued from Page 1

to rest, eat, and retreat from the street, they are likely to stick to that rule, he said.

As for the existing problems at the church, Mitulski said he was learning about them for the first time that night and would take measures to address the parking, noise, and other nuisances. "But not all of these problems were caused by the church," he said. "And we can't solve all of them."

The shelter is to be run by the Ark of Refuge, a San Francisco nonprofit organization that has administered two similar shelter programs in the city, including one at the Eureka Valley Recreation Center. "We won't be reinventing the wheel," said Eric Politzer, an Ark of Refuge consultant helping to set up the program.

Strict rules of operation should minimize the shelter's impact on residents, Politzer said. The program will hire two people to staff the facility each night. Drugs, alcohol, and tobacco will not be allowed. No "drop-in" clients will be permitted, which should prevent homeless people from gathering at the church, he said.

Those precautions were reassuring to Homer Hobi, who lives on 27th Street, less than a block from the church. "It sounds like it's going to be a pretty much invisible program." He added that he approved of the project's goals.

"The urgency of getting this started takes precedence over some of the potential problems," he said.

Another neighbor, Mia Hatakeyama, said she too approves of the idea of giving a helping hand to young people in need of shelter. But she admitted being frightened as well. "I don't want to be one of those people who says, 'Not in my back yard,'" she said. "But some of these concerns have to be addressed."

She wanted to know whether security guards would be hired to ensure safety. Politzer said guards might be hired if the five-month budget, estimated at about \$115,000, could accommodate it.

Asked why the church doesn't open a shelter in the Castro MCC, Mitulski said the facilities (at 150 Eureka St.) are already overbooked and used by more than 50 groups and programs. The Golden Gate MCC, on the other hand, is underutilized, he said, and has a kitchen, a shower, and available space for beds.

Mitulski and other church members said they were moving quickly to create the Noe Valley program after their proposal to set up a shelter at 2500 Market St. near 17th was shot down by the Community Action Council, a Castro neighborhood organization formed to assess youth homelessness in that neighborhood.



Darkstar, 21, is sleeping in his van these days, but says he might avail himself of the Noe Valley shelter if he needed to take a break from the street. Photo by Kathryn Guta

The council, which had been considering options for 2500 Market since last summer, decided to adopt an alternative shelter plan that would create longer-term "transitional housing" at the site. Under that plan, homeless youth from the Castro would commit to a 90-day stay during which they would get substance-abuse and job counseling designed to help them get off the street permanently.

The council's decision, which came in early November, meant that the need for temporary shelter would go unmet without quick action, said Tawnee Walling, Mitulski's assistant. "Admittedly, we gave the [Noe Valley] residents short notice," she said. "But we just found out that we had to move ahead on this."

Neighborhood organizations haven't assessed the church's proposal, but at least one—the Upper Noe Neighbors—plans to meet with Mitulski in December to learn more about the plan.

"It would be nice for this neighborhood to be able to help—if it didn't create a negative impact," said Vicki Rosen, the group's president, who lives a few blocks away from the church herself. "We don't want to be 'Nimbys,' but if there are problems, they have to be addressed."

Mitulski will discuss the proposal at a meeting of the Upper Noe Neighbors on Thursday, Dec. 9 (the meeting will be held at Upper Noe Recreation Center, Day and Sanchez streets, at 7:30 p.m.).

A few days before, on Dec. 5, Mitulski will deliver a sermon titled "Why Christians Should Help the Homeless," at Golden Gate MCC's regular Sunday service at 10:30 a.m. He invites the neighborhood to attend, and also to stay for a second community meeting on the shelter plan at noon.

Mitulski says he is committed to hearing the residents' concerns. "We want to be good neighbors and we want to run a successful shelter," he said, "and part of being a good neighbor means having a minimal impact." □

Would Street Kids Make Use of Church Refuge?

By Kathryn Guta

With eyebrows shaved like dots and dashes, and earlobes pierced with rings and spools, "Darkstar" has the look of a feisty street kid who can take care of himself. Still, he might decide to check in to an overnight shelter on Church Street in Noe Valley—if he really needed to eat and to rest.

"Right now I live in my van," he said on a recent Friday evening while hanging out near the Eureka Valley Recreation Center on Collingwood Street in the Castro.

"Housing is too expensive. But I love the city and want to stay. I've tried getting jobs, but no one will hire me, even though I went to college for a year. That's why kids become prostitutes, because there is nothing else available to us."

Darkstar, 21, is one of the estimated 2,000 young homeless people in the city being targeted by the Metropolitan Community Church (see story, page 1). A dozen of them were gathered at the community center, laughing, razzing one another, trading cigarettes. Most said they thought the church's proposed shelter in Noe Valley was a good idea.

"I will definitely use the shelter rather than sleep out on the street," said 20-year-old Will Dirtpirate.

Dirtpirate said he manages to "couch-trip" at the homes of friends about 75 percent of the time. But when he's forced to spend the night outdoors, "I don't go to sleep, because I'm too afraid."

"Star," a 19-year-old who wears a hooded sweatshirt decorated with bottle-cap art, said she became homeless at 13, when her mother threw her out of the house "for personal reasons." She admits that life is sometimes rough on the streets, but she prizes her independence.

"I would go to the shelter if it were cold or rainy. Otherwise, I'd rather stay outside," she said.

Like Star, John Mire, a native of Michigan (who often goes by "Greyhound"), does not enjoy the "locked-down" feeling of a shelter. "I want to get up and go to the corner store when I want to," he said.

Mire, 21, also said that "homeless shelters can contribute to kids not taking responsibility for their own lives." But he still thinks a gay youth shelter is needed.

Allin Morgan, 19, said he just wished the church's homeless shelter was located in the Castro, where most of the street kids hang out.

But until that happens, they'll take anything they can get. □



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LETTERS 33¢

Sniffing Out a Solution

Editor:

Thanks for your excellent coverage of the off-leash dog issue at Upper Noe Rec Center. There are several important points that the Upper Noe Dog Committee feels must be made to clarify this volatile issue.

First, this is most emphatically NOT an issue that divides dog owners and parents! Most of us are parents, and all of us are families. Only a few individuals are trying to divide our neighborhood.

And contrary to what has been implied, there is no division among the leaders of our group. We all agree that any proposal that accommodates the entire community merits serious consideration. At the same time, we all are very concerned about the community losing its historic on-leash access to the field.

In addition, we are opposed to the currently proposed dog-run area because it is far too small (it is much smaller than the 30 ft. by 200 ft. area suggested in your November story) and consequently does not allow for safe and satisfying recreation for our dogs or us. Rec and Park chief Joel Robinson has already been advised of this problem by his own park supervisors, who are also grappling with the unwieldy removable fence idea. The real problem is that any dog run that is too small is counterproductive and will be ignored.

Nevertheless, we look forward to working with Mr. Robinson and his staff. You see, we can sniff and wag at the same time!

We feel strongly that responsibly sharing the entire field before 9 a.m. and after 6 p.m. is a far better plan for everyone. It is poor drainage, not dogs, that will inevitably hurt the new sod.

Joby Shinoff
Lewis Loeven
Muna Nashashibi

No Broccoli for Me, Thanks

Editor:

On the morning of Nov. 8, I passed my weekly time at the 29th and Church laundromat, sitting outside and reading the angry responses in your paper to Georgia Schuttish's letter about irresponsible dog owners. While I read on the laundromat bench, a huge hound was tied very loosely by a piece of fabric to a parking meter. Shortly thereafter, a woman came along to feed the meter so that her car would not be ticketed. The dog, snarling with bared fangs, launched itself at her to bite, barely missing the woman. This caused the dog owner to saunter out of the laundromat, full of concern about what had disturbed his dog, ignoring the woman.

Walking down Church, to go home with my laundry bag, I passed the produce store on 30th, where a truck was being unloaded. As the driver had his back turned carrying another box, one box of vegetables was copiously urinated on by a wandering, unattended, unleashed dog.

I join Georgia Schuttish in feeling that children, even people, take precedence over pets, and over those who prefer now to be called their guardians, who too often are themselves hairless apes whose cages need cleaning.

Lee Hopkins
Whitney Street

Flocking to the Film Festival

Editor:

We just got some great shots of "our" Noe Valley/Mission parrots for IDG's film-in-progress, *The Wild Parrots of San Francisco*. Although the main focus of the documentary is the conure flock on Telegraph Hill, we want to show the canary-winged parakeets as well, because they were the first flock to establish themselves in the city, and because, well, be-

cause I live in Noe Valley! Plus, they're really cute: they're smaller than the conures and they're entirely green except for some yellow on their wings.

Clipper Street resident Kim Bullis put me together with Susan Sun, who allowed me to film from her fire escape last week. The flock showed up and showed off for the camera, wheeling and screaming away. (P.S. If anyone has good, clear sound recordings of the flock, I could really use it.)

Meanwhile, Mark Bittner has moved out of his cottage on Telegraph Hill. We filmed his last feeding of the parrots, his move, and even the construction crew cutting down the small tree the parrots used to perch in when he fed them. Mark is staying with friends in Oakland, but he would love to find a house-sit or caretaker situation in the city.

Now that we've finished principal photography, we need "origin-of-the-flock" stories. If you think you know how either flock got started, call me at 824-5822.

Finally, if you need a tax write-off for this year, I'm looking for finishing funds for the movie—it's a nonprofit, charitable project with 501(c)(3) tax status. Better yet, I'd love to find someone who loves this city and its wildlife to become executive producer for the film and accompany me to Sundance! (Our earlier film *Dark Circle* won the Grand Prize at Sundance.)

Judy Irving
Independent Documentary Group
394 Elizabeth St.
San Francisco, CA 94114

Of Bus Zones, Bus Bulbs, and Stop Bars

Editor:

Although I work for Muni as a transit planner, I'm writing on my own behalf, not as a representative of Muni.

Evidently people in the Noe Valley Merchants Association, with at least some support from other neighborhood groups, are recommending that current bus stop zones (the red curbs with the white boxes painted on the pavement) be converted either to bus bulbs or stop bars.

So far as I can tell, the reason for wanting to convert stops on 24th Street is to allow more curb parking; the reason on Castro is to allow for conversion of existing curb parking to angled parking.

I don't think that parking problems caused by automobile users should be solved at the expense of bus riders. Bus riders are part of the solution, not part of the problem. For bus riders, bus zones work a lot better than simply having a stop bar painted in the street. Even if the bus driver does not pull all the way to the curb, the zone still makes it easier for riders to get on and off, since most of the time the zone is clear of automobiles.

Bus bulbs, when done properly, help both bus riders and bus drivers. However, they cost money to install and take time to construct.

On the other hand, angled parking, especially in shopping districts, makes driving more difficult and dangerous, both for bus drivers and automobile drivers.

Michael Cronbach
Elizabeth Street

LOOK US UP ON THE WEB

THE VOICE invites you to come visit our web site. Our address is www.noevalleyvoice.com.

The site includes stories dating from December 1996. And as of this month, we have a "search" function, enabling you to search for key words throughout our online archives.

It's nifty. Go take a look.



Members of the Noe Valley NERT (neighborhood emergency response team) donned their vests and hard hats for an earthquake drill Oct. 16 at Marina Middle School. Photo by Tom Groves

City Says Don't Be Bugged by Y2K

Continued from Page 1

pagne in the comfort of your own living room. Then you can watch all those Y2K fears fizzle out on TV.

We All Have a Date with the Big One

In addition, there are other precautions residents can take for Y2K—or for any disaster, for that matter.

“Y2K is just like any other event that might be coming at you, like an earthquake,” Canton says. “The only difference is, we get to prepare for this one.”

He points out that the city has learned many valuable lessons in the 10 years since the Loma Prieta Earthquake. One is that if a disaster happens, emergency services might be spread extremely thin.

So each family should take steps to prepare themselves. First, residents should put together an earthquake kit and make sure it's within easy reach. Your kit should contain water and food for three days, enough prescription medicine to last seven days, first-aid supplies, shoes and clothing, a portable radio, a flashlight, and extra batteries.

Although the authorities are confident Y2K will not cause major problems, it never hurts to develop a personal “contingency plan.” Talk to your Noe Valley friends and neighbors about starting a block group. Trade phone numbers and survival strategies.

Another big lesson from Oct. 17, 1989, is that San Francisco must be ready and willing to use citizen volunteers. “The public can carry a tremendous load for you,” Canton says.

Noe Valley NERT Is Alive and Alert

The members of the public who carry much of that load are the volunteers who make up the city's Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT). NERT volunteers receive extensive training from the San Francisco Fire Department. They learn how to, among other things, check for building damage, put out fires, and treat minor injuries.

Thankfully, Maxine Fasulis, coordinator for the Noe Valley NERT, has “pages” of Noe Valley residents who have taken the training. During an emergency, the local NERT command center will be at James Lick Middle School on 25th Street between Noe and Castro streets. You'll know NERT members by their yellow hard hats and orange vests, she says.

When and if—well, when—a disaster strikes San Francisco, Fasulis says, “We know there is going to be a massive turnout of volunteers. NERT is a way to harness that energy.”

When asked what's the best advice she could give her neighbors about disaster preparedness, Fasulis answers, “Take the NERT training.” Anyone can take the six-week course. It's free, and you'll come away with expert knowledge in six main areas: Earthquake Awareness, Disaster Skills, Disaster Medicine, Light Search and Rescue, Team Organization, and Hands-On Training.

To find out about joining the Noe Valley group, contact Fasulis at 641-5536. She says if enough people are interested, she'll help schedule a training this spring.

Meanwhile, go next door and exchange numbers with your neighbor. And be sure to wish them a happy (and not too wild) New Year's celebration. □

Zeroing In on the Year 2000

■ You can examine the city's Y2K status, find nonemergency phone numbers, and read how to prepare yourself for Y2K at www.ci.sf.ca.us. Click on “Year 2000 Information.”

■ For information about San Francisco's Neighborhood Emergency Response Teams (NERTs), or if you'd like to inquire about training for your business or community organization, call 558-3456. Or peruse the course outline at www.slip.net/~nertsffd. If you want the scoop on the Noe Valley NERT, call Maxine Fasulis at 641-5536.

■ If you'd like to volunteer to be a lookout at the Millennium Celebration, call the Mayor's Office of Emergency Services at 558-2703.



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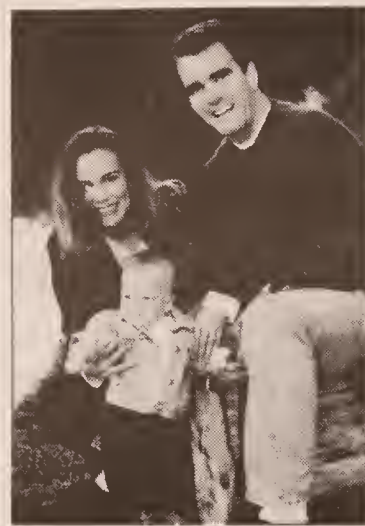
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POLICE BEAT

Witnesses Foil Purse-snatching

By Officer Lois Perillo

With the help of witnesses, police arrested a 32-year-old man who robbed a woman of her purse while she was inside Walgreen's. Here's how it went down:

On Tuesday, Oct. 12, at about 6 p.m., a 50-year-old woman was at the drug-store's front cash register paying for her purchases when a man came up behind her, grabbed her purse, and pushed her into the sales counter. With the woman on his heels, the suspect ran from the store to a vehicle parked on Jersey Street. Her yelling got the attention of her 37-year-old nephew who was waiting for her outside. It also alerted another man, 29, who tackled the suspect, causing him to toss away the woman's purse.

Meanwhile, the suspect's waiting car approached and he yelled to the occupants: "Run him over." When the witness saw two people and a large dog in the car, he released the suspect, who got into the vehicle and drove away.

Lieutenant John Carlin responded to the call from Walgreen's and broadcast a suspect and vehicle description. Officers Mario Molina and Andy Castro spotted the vehicle traveling east on Cesar Chavez at Bryant Street. After stopping the vehicle, the police took all witnesses and the targeted woman to the scene, where they identified the suspect, James Hudson. The other two adults in the car were interviewed and released. Hudson was booked on robbery charges, and remains in custody pending his court date.

Burglar Falls Through Skylight

Two nights before, two men were caught while fleeing from a business they had apparently burglarized, but only after one of them crashed through the post office skylight in a failed attempt to outmaneuver police.

When Officers Angel Lozano and Malcolm Anderson headed to Hahn's Hibachi at 4:17 a.m. on Columbus Day, Monday, Oct. 11, they were responding to a call made by an alarm company. Upon arriving at the Castro Street restaurant, the officers saw the front door open and heard noises coming from inside. They then noticed two male suspects within the business. More officers were requested to "set up a perimeter," police parlance for watching all possible escape routes. A police search dog and handler were also called.

Officer Eugene Yoshii and his dog Copper were the first to enter the restaurant. But the suspects quickly fled out the rear, up some steps, and over nearby building roofs. One suspect, 39-year-old Ro Matiatini of Portland, Ore., was arrested after he exited a gate on the 4000 block of 24th Street. But the second suspect's capture was quite dramatic.

The 34-year-old man, Nemani Suguturaga of East Palo Alto, apparently ran over the post office roof and onto the skylight, which gave way and dropped Suguturaga into the Noe Valley Post Office at about 4:29 a.m., way before business hours. (The Postal Inspector was immediately called to secure the building.)

Suguturaga was treated for cuts at San Francisco General Hospital and later booked on burglary and burglary tool possession. He was released Wednesday, Oct. 13, on his promise to appear in court. His alleged partner in crime, Matiatini,

was booked on the same charges and is in custody pending his court date.

Run, But You Can't Hide

In another incident, a burglar who pushed down an 86-year-old Noe Valley resident was followed by a female witness, detained by two off-duty sheriffs, and later arrested by police.

When the elder man, accompanied by a 44-year-old woman, entered the door to his Castro Street home at about 1 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 18, they heard suspicious sounds coming from inside the house. Both retreated to call police.

Meanwhile, the witnesses saw two suspects, a man and a woman, exit the building. While the woman witness remained on the line with police dispatch, the elder man confronted the male suspect. The witnesses said the suspect then pushed the older man to the ground and ran south on Castro to 24th Street. The female witness followed the male suspect southbound to Noe, then east on 25th Street, where two off-duty San Francisco deputy sheriffs, who had witnessed the earlier assault, intervened and detained the suspect.

When Officers Dianne McKevitt and Maria Oropeza arrived, they took 26-year-old Brent Garrard into custody. The elder man identified Garrard, and police found items belonging to the elder man in Garrard's possession. The California Street resident was booked on two felonies, burglary and receiving stolen property. The district attorney's office added another felony count of aggravated assault. Garrard is currently at county jail awaiting his court date.

Three Strikes and...

A 26-year-old man who had been arrested in three auto burglaries within Noe Valley over the past three years was convicted of his most recent crime and sent to state prison for 16 months.

Alvin Azama, a resident of 41st Avenue, was originally convicted of a 1996 auto burglary at Diamond and Clipper. He received three years probation. Then in May 1997, the probation was revoked upon his arrest for another auto burglary, this time on the 900 block of Sanchez. When Azama was arrested in February 1998 for a Vicksburg and Elizabeth Street burglary, he was released pending trial. But when he failed to appear in court, the judge issued a \$10,000 bench warrant. Azama evaded police until January 1999, at which time he was arrested, pled guilty, and sent to prison.

In a recent sentencing for another burglary case, 33-year-old Robert Erickson got eight years in state prison for burglarizing an apartment on the 900 block of Guerrero Street.

A 33-year-old man accused of burglar-

Continued on Page 13



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POLICE BEAT

Continued from Page 11

izing a flat on the 1000 block of Dolores Street in August 1999 remains in custody pending his January 2000 trial.

No October Domestic Violence Cases

A 41-year-old resident of the 800 block of Noe, who was charged with battering his wife in a March 1999 case, recently pled guilty to malicious mischief and got three years' probation.

Although I found no reported cases of domestic violence within my beat during the month of October, I acknowledge that some cases never make it into a police report. And experience tells me that this is the time of year when domestic violence may rear its ugly head. While the holidays bring joy, they also bring stress. So, I'm reprinting the list of resources I included in my October column.

Some Local Resources

W.O.M.A.N. Inc. (24-hour hotline)	864-4722
S.F. Neighborhood Legal Assistance (for restraining Orders)	982-1300
Volunteer Legal Service (Bar Assn.)	989-1616
Community United Against Violence (same-sex domestic violence)	333-4357
S.F. Women Against Rape	647-7273
Rape Treatment Center	821-3222
The Talk Line (children)	441-KIDS
Children Trauma Project	206-5323
Men Overcoming Violence/MOVE (offenders)	777-4496
ManAlive (offenders)	979-5933
SFPD Domestic Violence Response Unit 850 Bryant St. #561 (criminal complaint follow-up)	553-9225

Also, here are a few reminders to thwart thieves:

- Take your presents and other belongings out of your vehicle.
- Use light and radio timers at home.
- Let your trusted neighbors know your schedule.
- Use motion/heat-sensitive lighting outside your home.
- Have someone stay at or visit your home while you are away.
- Mark any items a thief might find appealing (TV, camera, laptops, bikes, tools) with your California driver's license number.
- Call SAFE (Safety Awareness for Everyone) at 553-1984 for a free security survey and to start a neighborhood watch group.
- Give to your favorite charity, but NOT to Jim the Con Man, known for soliciting funds for his "daughter's soccer team" while masquerading as your local block captain. "Jim"—real name Joseph Lawrence—should be in jail for two felony burglary charges by the time you read this, thanks to Inspector Mark Sullivan and all of you who called me!

As the winter solstice approaches and the days shorten, have a wonderful holiday, and let's continue to watch out for one another. I'll see you on patrol. □

San Francisco Police Officer Lois Perillo covers her Noe Valley beat—from Valencia to Grand View and 21st to Cesar Chavez—on foot and on bicycle. If you would like to discuss a crime or safety problem, call her at 558-5404, the community policing line at Mission Station.



Resolutions for the New Millennium

Continued from Page 1

other momentous changes in a person's life, such as the birth of a child or the start of a new job. But any way you look at it, it's a millennial accomplishment.

If you're going to make changes, it's important "not to have a long list of changes," says Iris Stallworth-Grayling, a therapist at Noe Valley Psychotherapy on 24th Street. Rather, she says, a person should "focus on one aspect of themselves that they are not comfortable with and really concentrate on changing it."

You should expect that the course of change will not be linear, Stallworth-Grayling adds, "but will involve progress and falling back." The trick is not to be discouraged by reverses. "Break down [the process of change] into small achievable steps, so you won't be overwhelmed by the enormity of what you need to accomplish." Your success in one area will inspire you to make changes in other areas as well, Stallworth-Grayling says.

After you've transformed your inner self, you might want to take a look at the inside of your house or workplace. Too much clutter? Too many unpaid bills lying around? Allison Van Norman, a professional organizer, urges people to resolve to do a 5- to 10-minute daily pickup in their homes or offices. "That makes the biggest difference in my clients' lives," she says. Use that time to put away everything you took out that day, as well as to go through the mail.

If you're a renter—a soon-to-be organized one—the best thing you could do for yourself in the next millennium is save up and buy a house, advises Christian Connelly, a mortgage banker for the Bank

of America. "It's such a wonderful investment—it will vastly improve the quality of your life," he says.

Victoria Hamman, a Noe Valley naturopathic doctor, has one word for the new millennium: "Detoxify," she says. "I would detoxify on a regular basis and rid the body not just of drugs and alcohol, but of all the environmental toxins we take in."

Dr. John Pierce, a physician with Noe Valley Family Medicine on 24th Street, recommends that we switch our emphasis from one of treating illnesses to one of maintaining wellness. "You should do whatever it takes to maintain your physical functioning. Be physically active, avoid situations that make you angry, and get a regular checkup."

Pierce adds that participating in the community, in whatever form you choose, is also a positive step toward the future. "The health of the community is equally as important as our own individual health."

Father Mario Farana of St. Paul's Catholic Church on Church Street agrees that this is the time to renew relationships with family and friends. Much love is returned when we give it, he says.

"People are most happy when sharing with others," says Farana. And at the end of life, "people don't think about how much more money they could have made, but rather about how much more time they could have spent with their loved ones."

Entering the year 2000 gives us a perfect opportunity to reconsider our values, says Keenan Kelsey, pastor of the Noe Valley Ministry on Sanchez. "We have to realize ourselves and make life choices based on the values that are important." Kelsey adds that progress and change, in ourselves and in the world at large, "have to be based on values like truth, harmony, tolerance, faith, and love."

Reverend Karen Oliveto, pastor of Bethany Methodist Church, says her wish is that "we all will make a millennium resolution to give up greed and create a com-

Weighing In: Expert Advice on Holiday Eating

By Stephanie Rapp

It starts with those miniature Hershey bars hoarded from Halloween. Add to that the Thanksgiving turkey, stuffing, pumpkin pie, and midnight leftovers. Top it off with Hanukkah latkes, Christmas eggnog, and New Year's Eve caviar. It's no surprise that the average American gains 8 to 12 pounds this time of year. In San Francisco, we gain only 5 to 7 pounds, but that is still enough to send us running, resolutions in hand, to the gym on January 1.

Take heart. There are plenty of local resources to help us avoid those holiday gains.

For one, Weight Watchers holds meetings on Wednesday nights in the Castro (the closest place to Noe Valley). About 100 men and women attend for a weigh-in, pep talk, and nutrition and diet information. WW group leader Lisa Camozzi has some simple advice based on her 14 years with the program. "Take responsibility," she says. "When you realize it's not your spouse or your job that's making you eat, then you can change."

She also says that preparing a mental plan of attack can help you rise above tempting situations. Most of us know what we'll be facing when we arrive for a holiday meal or party. Decide what you want to eat in advance and try to stop when you are full, she says.

Camozzi adds that consistency over the long haul is the key. "It isn't one cocktail party that will make you fat."

Making consistent healthy choices is what Cathleen Henderson has been preaching to Noe Valley residents for 16 years. As the owner of Lite for Life on Sanchez Street, Henderson provides nutritional counseling that focuses on behavior modification and stabilization of blood sugar. The prepackaged foods, which conform to the plan's starch and protein limits, are optional, she says, but they are useful for busy people who don't have time to prepare healthy meals.

Henderson's advice is to avoid sweets, which trigger blood sugar surges and dips and invariably make you feel hungrier. She also suggests eating five times per day. "Don't go out to a party or dinner when you're famished. You'll pig out."

While she's always busy this time of year, Henderson notes a recent surge in clients, which she attributes to the approach of the millennium. "People don't want to be fat in the year 2000."

Many diet experts swear sugar is to blame. Others point the finger at carbohydrates. According to Nicky Salan, owner of Cover to Cover Booksellers on

munity of plenty for everyone." In that way, Oliveto continues, "we will be able to provide a sustainable future for our children and our children's children."

Speaking of children, Noe Valley psychotherapist Susan Frankel, who specializes in parenting issues, says that she would like to see parents resolve to "create more flexibility, generosity, and kindness towards themselves as parents." This will enable them to be kinder to their children and "to parent with more grace and less stress" for years to come.

Finally, let's not forget our animal friends and what we can do to make their lives better. Celia Sack, co-owner of Noe Valley Pet Company, says she hopes pet owners will resolve to "take their dogs to the beach as much as possible. It makes them so happy. And a happy dog makes for a happy owner."

Whatever your resolutions for the new millennium, may they bring you health and happiness and contribute to a better world for all of us. □

RESOURCES

Weight Watchers

Weight Watchers meets Wednesdays in Room 205 of the MCC Center, 150 Eureka St. (at 18th). Registration and weigh-in are at 6:30 p.m. The meeting starts at 7 p.m. Call 1-800-651-6000 for further information.

Overeaters Anonymous

Overeaters Anonymous meets daily at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. Meetings are from 7 to 8 a.m. Monday through Saturday, and from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. on Sunday. Call 436-0651 for additional meeting times and places.

Lite for Life

Lite for Life is located at 1300 Sanchez St., at the corner of 26th Street. The office is open Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Thursday, 7 a.m. to noon; and Saturday, 9 a.m. to noon. Phone 641-4489 for details about the program.

Counseling

Diana Murphy, M.F.C.C., is a therapist who specializes in eating disorders. She can be reached at 681-1767.

24th Street, the best-selling diet books this year are *The Carbo Addict's Program for Success* (\$14.95) and *The Carbohydrate Addict's Healthy Heart Program* (\$24.95). These books, by Richard and Rachael Heller, focus on the evils of carbs and the virtues of protein. The Hellers' program also harkens back to the Atkins' diet of the '70s, and is nearly as controversial. (Fat is on the menu.)

For most of us, holiday splurging means only an extra handful of cashews at the office party and five or six gingerbread cookies on Christmas. But for individuals with eating disorders or those who are chronic overeaters, holiday indulging can be disastrous.

According to Diana Murphy, M.F.C.C.,

Continued on Next Page

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Weighing In Over the Holidays

Continued from Previous Page

a therapist specializing in eating disorders, we all use food to nurture ourselves through stressful times. However, for some people, eating moves from nurturance to numbing. "You eat too much at a party. So you go home and eat ice cream and candy. Then you tell yourself that you're a terrible person, and you binge for a week."

Her advice to break the cycle begins with awareness. "Look at what is really going on emotionally. Talk to someone, a friend or a therapist, when you feel overwhelmed. And forgive yourself. Eating too much once or twice is not criminal."

Chronic overeating is not limited to the holidays, though for some it can escalate at this time.

Overeaters Anonymous (OA) provides a supportive environment for individuals whose eating negatively impacts their lives. Overeaters, as well as those with bulimia or anorexia (and family and friends), are welcome to attend OA's daily meetings at the Noe Valley Ministry.

According to a member of the local group, "If you eat for the wrong reasons, you're not alone. OA is one solution." OA is not a weight-loss program but a recovery program based on the 12-step model. There are no fees and no weigh-ins at this "spiritual but non-religious" program.

I'd like to suggest another resource we have in the neighborhood: hills. Given that parking is impossible in Noe Valley this time of year, try doing your holiday errands on foot.

Just to write this story, I logged almost four miles. Using a pedometer for accuracy, I walked from my house on 20th and Noe to the post office to mail holiday cards (.57 miles). Then I took two paces down 24th Street to the Noe Valley Bakery, where I stopped by the open door and sniffed the freshly baked pumpkin pie (they say taste is 90 percent smell). Next I went window shopping on 24th Street until I reached Sanchez (.19 miles), then down Sanchez to Lite for Life at 26th Street (.13 miles), then back up Sanchez to the Noe Valley Ministry and over to Cover to Cover on 24th (.6 miles). Next, I took a spin through Douglass Park (1.1 miles), and then hiked home via Weight Watchers at 18th and Eureka (1.4 miles). Total distance: 3.99 miles. Walking briskly, I burned approximately 350 calories, the equivalent of a slice of pumpkin pie and glass of champagne.

My other tip is to drink lots of water (water keeps you full and actually decreases water retention). Also, park as far away as you can from your destination and enjoy your favorite foods in moderation. Happy holidays. □



Some local artists—including (clockwise from left, standing) Susan LaFranchi-Madonich, Linda Saytes, Sherrod Blankner, Denise Denis, and Celeste McCarty—have formed an international women's artists collective called 24Seven.

SHORT TAKES

Dedicate a Library Book

If you're in need of a gift for the book lover on your list, the San Francisco Public Library has an idea for you.

For a tax-deductible donation of \$25 to the Main Library or branch library of your choice, the Books to Branches Fund will purchase a new book for the library's shelves and put a bookplate on the inside cover inscribed with the name of your friend, colleague, or family member. The bookplate reads, "Presented to the San Francisco Public Library in honor of _____ by _____."

"This is a win-win opportunity for people to support the branch libraries," says Donna Corbeil, chief of branches. "It gives folks a chance to be personally involved in strengthening the collection at their favorite branch, while at the same time acknowledging a friend or loved one with a bookplate."

Unfortunately, patrons will not be able to choose a particular book to donate. "It would make the process too complicated," says Beverly Hennessey, of the library's public affairs office.

However, the library will notify the honoree of the purchase through a letter from the City Librarian. Donors can also choose to make a donation without the bookplate feature, or have the library create a special design, in memory of someone who has died, for instance.

If you're interested in more details, call Hennessey at 557-4277. Or pick up a donor form at the Main or any branch library. The staff at the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library on Jersey Street (695-5095) welcomes your inquiries.

Arts Donations Really Pay Off

To keep the arts in San Francisco vibrant, Grants for the Arts is again encouraging city taxpayers to contribute to the Voluntary Arts Contribution Fund (VACF).

By adding a tax-deductible donation of \$5 or more to their December 1999 property tax payments, property owners can keep San Francisco's small theaters, galleries, parks, neighborhood centers, and school programs thriving.

"The fund brings urgently needed assistance to many of the city's nonprofit arts and cultural organizations that may have nowhere else to turn for their emer-

gency needs," says Kary Shulman, director of Grants for the Arts.

According to Shulman, 100 percent of the money is distributed to local groups, and VACF often provides support for equipment and capital improvements, including safer wiring for lights, wheelchair ramps, and fireproofing.

Last year, the VACF distributed \$150,000—the largest amount in the fund's 15-year history—to 58 San Francisco nonprofits, including California Contemporary Dancers, the Lorraine Hansbury Theatre, the Women's Building, the Chinese Cultural Foundation, and the San Francisco School of Circus Arts. In addition, the VACF was able to help bail out the San Francisco Mime Troupe when their truck was stolen in Los Angeles during a tour there.

"All San Franciscans and visitors benefit as a result of the VACF," says Schulman. "These grants are known as 'the little grants that make a big difference.'"

For more information, call 554-6710. Schulman notes that renters and businesses can contribute to the fund, too.

Women Who Paint 24Seven

Pastels, photographs, collages, and other works by four Noe Valley artists will be part of the 24Seven Holiday Art Show & Sale held Dec. 9 to 12 at SoMar Gallery.

24Seven, an eight-woman artists' collective based in San Francisco, was formed this fall, following the annual Open Studios exhibit. "We saw this as a way of being less isolated as artists," says Noe Valley resident Sherrod Blankner, a founding member of the group. Blankner will be exhibiting her landscape paintings at the 24Seven show.

Other participating Noe Valley artists will be Linda Saytes, who will show her pastels, watercolors, and collages; Denise Denis, conceptual art, photographs, and drawings; and Susan LaFranchi-Madonich, photographs and book art. Saytes says the name of their group, 24Seven, refers to the fact that "we all work on our art 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

A public reception for the artists will be given Dec. 9 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at SoMar, located at 934 Brannan St. Entertainment will include a "song-picture performance" in which 24Seven artist Nickova paints to the world-rock music of performance artist Mr. Eugene. When the painting is done, it will be auctioned off.

Gallery hours are Thursdays, 6 to 10 p.m., and Fridays through Sundays, noon to 4 p.m. For more information on the 24Seven exhibit, call 824-5756.

Continued on Next Page



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SHORT TAKES

How to Fill Holiday Stockings

If you want to help out those in need this holiday season, but you don't know where to go or what organizations could use your assistance, get in touch with the Volunteer Center of San Francisco.

The center has put together two thick publications — the city's *1999 Holiday Wish List* and *1999 Holiday Volunteer Opportunities* — describing hundreds of volunteer and gift-giving options in San Francisco. Here's a sampling:

■ On Lok's 30th Street Senior Center is in need of volunteers to serve meals to seniors during the holidays. Contact Kim Longenecker at 550-2214 for details.

■ The Salvation Army needs help organizing craft-making projects for homeless children. Call Salvation Army's volunteer coordinator at 252-6107.

■ Diamond Senior Center seeks help setting up and serving a potluck eggnog party to seniors on Dec. 30. Contact Betty Garvey at 863-3507.

■ The group Our Kids First wants donations of books and school supplies, plus volunteers to help students plan a Kwanzaa celebration. Call Maya Hart at 585-1104.

■ The International Rescue Committee needs donations of furniture, appliances, and toys for newly arrived refugee families from Kosovo and Bosnia. Contact Denene Andolpho at 863-3777.

■ The Jewish Museum of San Francisco is looking for helpers at a "Being Jewish on Christmas" exhibit and party on Dec. 25. Contact Phoebe Gurin at 543-2090, ext. 218.

■ The San Francisco Food Bank needs help sorting community food donations. Call Chris Sams at 282-1907, ext. 244.

■ The AIDS Emergency Fund seeks people who can wrap packages for four-hour shifts at Borders Books on Union Square. They'll raise money for people with AIDS. Call Clark Sealy at 558-6985.

To view lots more listings, log onto the Volunteer Center's web site at www.vcsf.org. Or you can receive a copy of both holiday publications by calling 982-8999.

This month's Short Takes were written by Kathy Dalle-Molle. If you'd like to publicize an event in our February issue, please e-mail your notice to jaxvoice@aol.com by Jan. 15.

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Photo by Pamela Gerard

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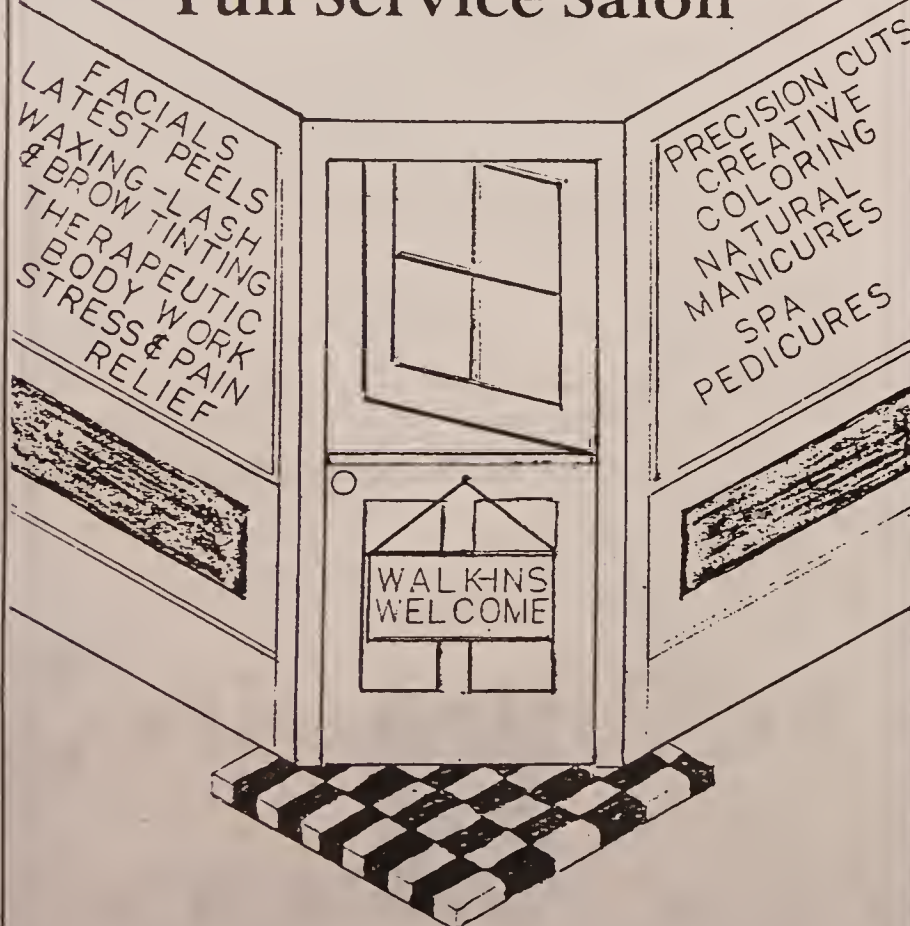
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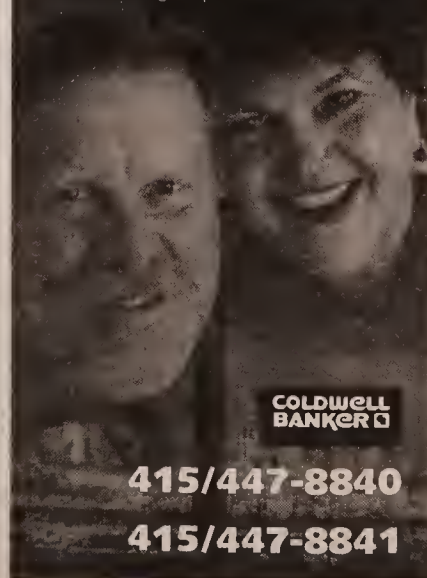
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The Noe Valley Music Series—

At 18, It's the Grand Old Opry of the Neighborhood

By Richard Dodds

On a balmy October evening, the church windows have been thrown open wide to help cool an eager crowd of concertgoers. Through one window, the lights from nearby homes twinkle in the early dark. Another offers a view through ruffled curtains of the sunflowers decorating a neighbor's kitchen. Inside the church, ponytails sway in time with the music.

It may look like a scene from *Meet Me in St. Louis*, or from some other movie about idyllic small-town life in a bygone era. But the setting is contemporary San Francisco, the ponytails are on the men, and the concert this evening features an Indian musician named Ustad Sultan Kahn playing an obscure instrument known as the *sarangi*.

Welcome to the Noe Valley Music Series.

Begun 18 years ago at the Noe Valley Ministry by a jazz flutist who was discouraged that he had no place to play, the series has showcased thousands of musicians, both celebrated and obscure, exotic and accessible.

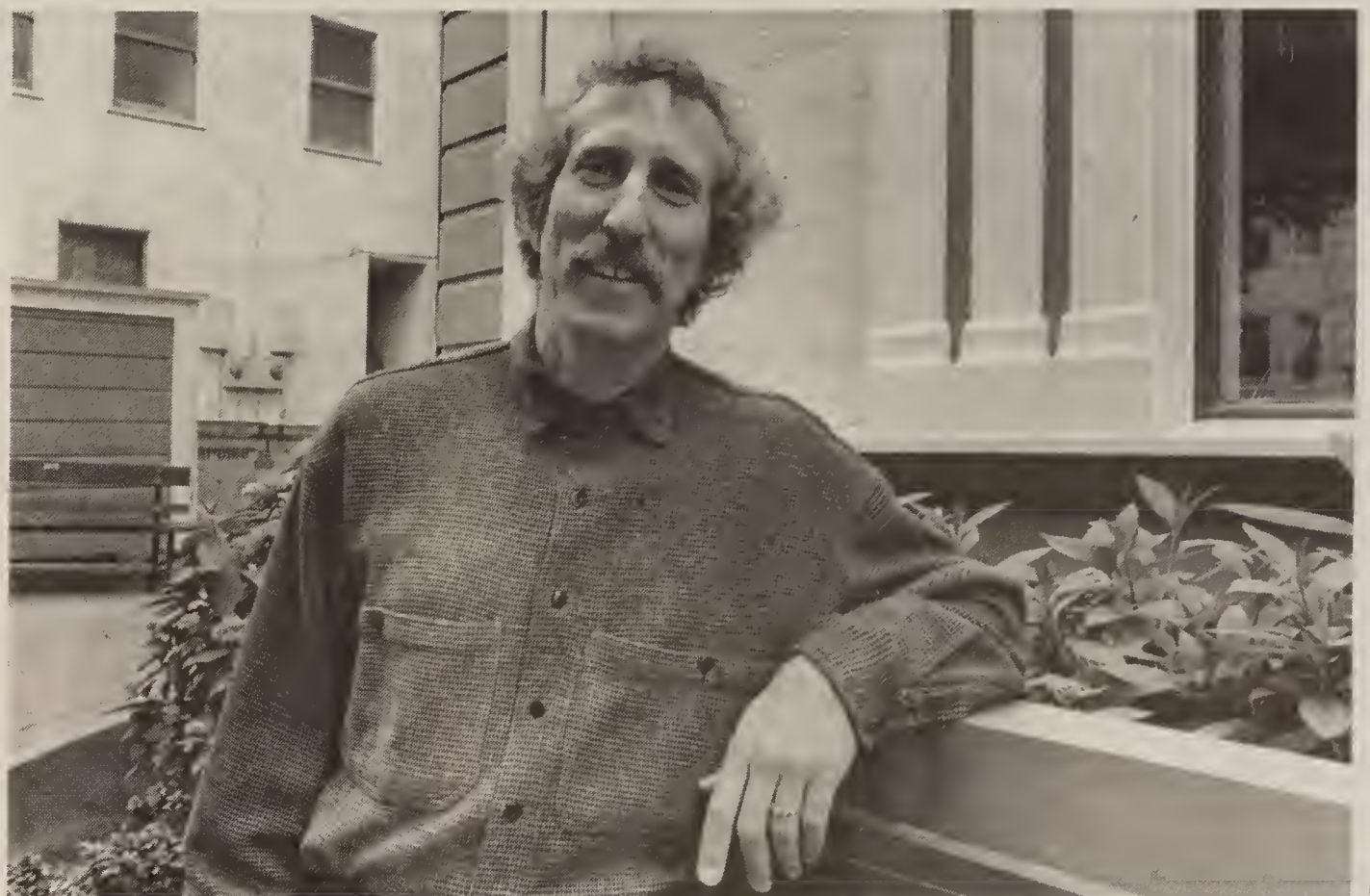
While the players have included such national names as Bobby McFerrin, Joan Baez, John Sebastian, Jesse Winchester, and the Persuasions, as well as musicians from as far away as Bali and Brazil, the focus has always been on homegrown talent.

Actually, jazz vocalist McFerrin fits into that category as well. Before his albums were topping the charts and "Don't Worry, Be Happy" became a ubiquitous anthem, the former Noe Valley resident was a series regular. Even after his fame took off, he remained loyal to Noe Valley Music.

"One night he'd be at the Ministry and the next night on the *Tonight Show*," recalls Larry Kasson, the flutist who founded the series in 1981. "Even though he could play larger venues, he kept coming back until he moved to Minneapolis a few years ago."

Other performers in similar situations continue to seek out the Noe Valley series, Kasson says, because it gives them a chance to try out new material in a low-pressure environment.

"They are not intimidated because people have spent \$50," says Kasson, noting that tickets for the music series are a relative bargain—\$15 or \$16 at the door, \$13 or \$14 in advance. "They also like the acoustics, and the fact that the reviewers are not there," he adds. "And they know they'll be playing for one of the best lis-



Flutist Larry Kasson is the founder and pied piper of the Noe Valley Music Series, the long-winded concert series at the Noe Valley Ministry. Photo by Pamela Gerard

tening audiences. We're loose and friendly, but do things professionally. It's just a nice scene."

When Kasson founded the series, he was an unmarried Noe Valley resident in his 20s, a demographic that reflected his audiences back then. But after Kasson, now 47, met and married his wife, Martha, and they became parents, housing costs dictated a move to the suburbs of Marin. The series has gone through similar demographic changes as the makeup of Noe Valley has changed.

"Audiences used to be mainly from Noe Valley, where a lot of artists and musicians lived before it got too expensive," Kasson says. "Our audiences have aged with us, but people in their 40s don't go out as much—I can relate to this—once they have kids and start renting videos. We have had to look to events that could draw people in their 20s and 30s."

Kasson finds it hard to categorize the musical style of the series, which originally was termed a jazz series. "What we do now has a world-music tinge or a contemporary tinge or an avant-garde tinge," he said. "Straight-ahead jazz doesn't work that well for us."

Audiences for the 45 or so concerts staged each year at the Ministry may sell out all 250 seats or fill but 30 of them. Because most of the annual budget of nearly \$100,000 is generated from ticket sales, filling those seats is important.

"You'd think after 18 years of a really great concert series, people would wander on down no matter who was on the bill," Kasson says. "But I've made it so

eclectic that it makes it hard but more interesting. We want to support groups that may not be big draws."

Although he occasionally performs at the concerts, the series has pretty much become a full-time job for Kasson. In 1992, he created the nonprofit San Francisco Live Arts to present the series so it would be eligible for grants. "But it's still mainly me," he says. "It's a Mom and Pop operation and I'm Mom and Pop." The only other staff member is Michelle King, who can usually be found at the box office on concert nights.

Kasson is on good terms with his host church, paying rent and helping with fundraising. "We've also had a pretty good relationship with the neighborhood," he says. "It's been years since there was a complaint, but one neighbor once went to the city saying, 'This isn't a church. It's a nightclub.' We got hundreds of letters of support, and a big group tramped down to City Hall. I was really bowled over by it."

The Ministry was awarded a special use permit, and all concerts must end by 11 p.m. and be no louder than 90 decibels. "That's the level of enthusiastic applause," Kasson says with a smile.

It's that particular sound that keeps him going. "You don't do it for the money," he adds. "But I feel I've created something that has benefited the performers and the neighborhood. People will thank you on their way out, and that makes you think this is all worthwhile." □



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Here's the series' winter schedule. All shows start at 8:15 p.m. and are held in the upstairs sanctuary at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. Advance tickets, usually in the \$12 to \$14 range, are available at Streetlight Records on 24th Street or for a couple of dollars more at the door. For information about specific concerts, call 454-5238.

Dec. 3	Actor/comic Geoff Hoyle and Friends in a special holiday performance
Dec. 11	Hanukkah concert with the San Francisco Klezmer Experience and Davka
Dec. 18	Peter Rowan and the Rowan Brothers' Reggaebilly Christmas Band
Jan. 8	The Terry Riley All-Stars with Terry Riley on piano, George Brooks on sax and flute, and Gyan Riley on guitar
Jan. 14	Folksinger/storyteller Ramblin' Jack Elliott
Jan. 15	Acoustic folk pop by the Box Set Duo
Jan. 22	Avant-classical music and jazz by the Tin Hat Trio
Jan. 28	Improvised jazz by Michael Manring, Larry Kasson, and Tom Darter
Feb. 11	Indie Grrl Tour (female singer/songwriter festival)
Feb. 12	British guitarist Adrian Legg
March 10-11	Balinese music by Gamelan Sekar Jaya

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NOE BUYS / NOE RENTS

The Price to Live in Noe Valley

The Noe Valley Voice this month launches a new feature: a table showing average rents and house prices for Noe Valley. We realize this information may be painful to some and exhilarating to others, but we thought you would want to know anyway. (Now don't hit us.) We are grateful to Zephyr Real Estate and Rent Tech for providing us with these statistics. "Noe Valley," for purposes of our survey, is an area bounded by Grand View, 22nd, Guerrero, and 30th streets. The house sales data cover all properties sold in Noe Valley, whether or not they were handled by Zephyr. However, the rental information was derived solely from Rent Tech's listings. Please note that the figures are for two months ago—October 1999—so prices may have gone up or down since.

NOE VALLEY HOUSE SALES — OCTOBER 1999*

Total Sales	Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)	Average Days on Market	Sale Price as % of List Price
<i>Single-family homes</i>					
15	415,000	1,400,000	778,566	21	113%
<i>Condominiums</i>					
2	350,000	385,000	367,500	18	68%
<i>2 to 4 unit buildings</i>					
6	499,000	1,261,500	769,583	34	103%
<i>5+ unit buildings</i>					
0	—	—	—	—	—

*Information provided courtesy of Zephyr Real Estate (www.zephyr-re.com) and based on sales recorded Oct. 1–31, 1999.

NOE VALLEY RENT PRICES**

Size of Apartment	Average Rent October 1999	Average Rent October 1995	% of Units for Rent in Noe Valley
<i>Studio</i>	\$ 1,025	\$ 685	9%
<i>1 bedroom</i>	1,580	1,000	25%
<i>2 bedrooms</i>	2,175	1,400	40%
<i>3 to 4 bedrooms</i>	2,750	2,025	25%

****Data based on all Noe Valley apartments listed by Rent Tech Rentals and Roommates for October 1999 and October 1995. For updates, go to www.renttech.com.**



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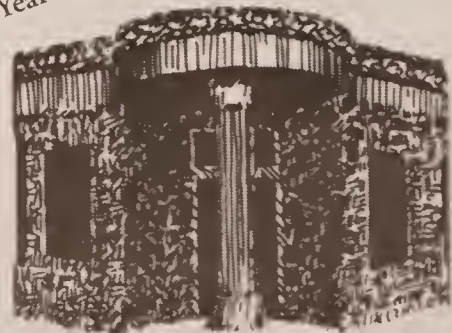
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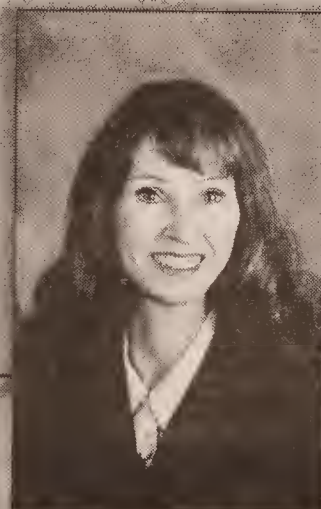
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Karen Allen in Control of Her First Novel

Her Protagonist Is a Noe Valley 20-Something

By Maire Farrington

As an undergraduate at Stanford University in the early 1980s, Noe Valley resident Karen Allen majored in English with an emphasis on creative writing. But it wasn't until seven years ago that she started writing seriously.

That's when she began her first novel, *Pearl City Control Theory*. Set in San Francisco, the novel features a young woman "who is an expert at statistical control at work and has great plans for revolutionizing the department she manages," Allen says. "But when it comes to her own life, the more she tries for control, the more things go awry."

Sara, the main character, is an avid walker. "One of her favorite things to do to clear her head is walk around San Francisco, especially the hilly blocks of Noe Valley where she lives." She is also the manager of the hand lotion division at a large product manufacturing firm.

Allen, 38, holds a master's degree in industrial engineering. She spent several years working for companies such as Kellogg's and Procter & Gamble (she managed the Crest Toothpaste department).

She clearly drew upon her work experience while developing her novel. "I had this manufacturing hierarchical corporate experience, and that was fun to write about in a satirical kind of way," she says.

Allen has also volunteered at a domestic violence shelter — another vocation she shares with her lead character.

"One thing they talked about [at the shelter] is how men use power and control to dominate women in a variety of different ways—they isolate them so they can't see any of their friends, they control their finances, and they make them feel worthless," Allen explains. "It's this whole control structure that [the staff] try to help the women understand."

Sara learns about this "control theory" at the shelter, and relates it to her own work and personal relationships. "Her training is to keep everything tight and structured," Allen says.

But Sara's world starts spinning when her husband decides to attend law school on the East Coast, her sister reveals she's having an affair, and she herself meets an intriguing new man.

Soon she discovers that "when human beings control each other, it's usually destructive—you can't use the same ideas for control in human relationships," Allen says. "Sara learns that you have to let things go out of control in a way, in order to really experience life."

Allen's ties to Noe Valley go back to childhood, when she lived on Douglass Street and attended Alvarado School for kindergarten and first grade before her family moved to Seattle. In 1979, Allen returned to the Bay Area to attend Stanford University. At school, she met her future husband, Peter Stamats. The couple lived on Church Street near Hancock from 1985 to 1987, and then moved to Iowa City, Iowa, for 6½ years. It was there that Allen began writing her novel.

"When I lived in Iowa City, I was so homesick," she says. "I would come back to Noe Valley, and I would just walk around the hills and see the light. I missed it, especially in the winter, because in Iowa it was very gray and cold. It felt so good to set the novel here because I could put my brain here."

Allen remembers the Noe Valley of her youth as being "very quiet, with not as



Author Karen Allen juggles writing with raising three kids, but still finds time to look for pastoral settings for her fiction. Photo by Pamela Gerard

many cars. Now it's much more bustling," she says. "You know you can walk down the street here and look at people and it's just fascinating. And you can walk up Castro and it's just extraordinary, it's wild."

In 1994 she returned to her beloved neighborhood, living for a short time on Liberty Street before she and Peter found their current home on Castro near Hill Street. Allen has since written a second novel and is at work on a third, to be called *Spanish Lessons*. "It's about a woman who also lives in Noe Valley or the Mission...in my mind I put her on Fair Oaks Street," she says. "This book is more of an adventure novel because the woman gets kidnapped."

Allen juggles her writing schedule with raising three children: Spencer, 9; Veronica, 6; and Abigail, 2 (a former "More Mouths" feature).

"When I first started writing, I set a goal of three hours a day," she says. "Then all of a sudden something clicked, and I was writing 10 hours a day. I was so into it. I fell in love with writing. That's why it got written so quickly. I was working at Procter & Gamble in a very structured job, and so this was like the floodgates let loose. I haven't been quite as prolific since then. With each child, as they're born, I get less and less time to write. So my writing is mostly in the morning now."

Allen self-published *Pearl City Control Theory*, which was released in July 1999. "I did the whole agent route and got a million rejections," Allen relates. "Mostly, agents said they liked my writing but they lacked sufficient enthusiasm for my project. I think it basically meant that they were never going to make a lot of money off my book. That's the driving force is

'When I lived in Iowa City, I was so homesick. I would come back to Noe Valley, and I would just walk around the hills and see the light. I missed it, especially in the winter, because in Iowa it was very gray and cold. It felt so good to set the novel here because I could put my brain here.' —Karen Allen

these days. So I said, 'Well, I can have sufficient enthusiasm for my project.'"

Would she advise others to self-publish? "It's not easy," she admits. "It's certainly nice if someone else publishes the work. It's a lot of work, but it's very satisfying in a way to have a finished product. A goal is to have people read it, and

it's certainly the easiest way, when it's in book form.

"But part of it was fun," she continues. "I could do the cover the way I wanted it, whereas most times you lose control over what the cover is going to look like if it goes off to a publisher." Allen did the cover sketch, and her sister-in-law Anne Stamats, a graphic artist, did the background art, layout, and design.

In the meantime, Allen is working on distribution and has done a book signing at Cover to Cover Booksellers on 24th Street. Her book is also available on *Amazon.com*, or you can check out a copy at the Noe Valley Library.

And Allen has kept ties with friends in Iowa City, where a local bookstore carries her novel. "It's a comic novel," she says. "It's fun to read. I had a lot of friends in Iowa City read it, and people who don't know California say, 'Oh, I really want to visit Noe Valley.'" □

Excerpt from Karen Allen's

Pearl City Control Theory


I started walking, what I call City Buddha—mind walking, the summer before Mark left for Georgetown. The day he left I woke up early, Mark's arm heavy across me. I rolled out from under it, quietly threw on some clothes and slipped outside into the fragile San Francisco dawn.

City Buddha—mind walking always took a few blocks to get going, to drop into the rhythm, to absorb the mood of the light and weather. Stepping out the door, I would plan my course, visualize the terrain, then I'd head towards a good-sized hill to get my blood moving. Somewhere near the top of it, I would find my pace for the day, I'd hit my stride. And then I could think.

San Francisco has amazing light. Mark said he never thought my love affair with the city would last so long—for someone who prided herself in being practical and logical, couldn't I see that a city is just concrete and asphalt and throngs of people hassled from living so close together? But on a clear day in San Francisco the sunlight dazzles, etching color and form with a clarity so keen it stings the retina. Then as afternoon darkens to evening, clouds roll in and tuck the city in under an opalescent blanket of pearl. For better or worse, I knew I belonged on this troubled tip of peninsula and nowhere else.

That summer before Mark left, our impending separation circled above our heads like a buzzard. In August it descended with a quick swoop and found me on the crest of Sanchez Street hugging my arms against the morning chill. The air was misty, the sky a lilac rose, the porcelain city spread in front of me. He's really going, I told myself. With a sharp stab the process of flesh eating and bone pecking had begun.

Reprinted from *Pearl City Control Theory* (Cabbages and Kings Press, San Francisco, 1999).



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STORE TREK

Storetrek is a *Voice* feature profiling stores and businesses that have recently set up shop in Noe Valley. This month we introduce a new sushi restaurant, a women's clothing boutique, a massage therapist, a video duplication service, and a shop that sells beads and other supplies for making your own jewelry.

Forbeadin'
1185 Church St. (near 24th)
641-1414

If you've always admired beaded jewelry but couldn't afford the price tag, or maybe you've never found the beads strung together exactly the way you'd like, then you should check out Forbeadin', an artsy-craftsy boutique that opened on Church Street in October. Nestled into the small space formerly occupied by Moptic (and before that Do Dah Days), Forbeadin' offers thousands of brightly colored beads and an equally full spectrum of jewelry-making supplies.

Owner Donna Davis says she relocated her store from Chestnut Street in the Marina to be closer to her daughter's school during the day. (Nine-year-old Vanessa attends Synergy School on Valencia Street.) "And Noe Valley is simply more bead-friendly," Davis says. "Customers come in here and get inspired. They start off with a pair of earrings, which is easy, and start thinking, Hey, maybe I can make other things!"

Davis conducts workshops on most Friday nights to teach the finer points of



Owner Donna Davis has the world on a string at Forbeadin', her new bead shop on Church Street. Photo by Charles Kennard

beading. (The classes are 7 to 10 p.m., but customers should call to confirm.)

The beads range from folksy to fine art, and come from Italy, China, Bali, Africa, Japan, and the Czech Republic. They are made of wood, glass, porcelain, precious metals, and pearls and gemstones, and are displayed in jewelry cases or in a myriad of small dishes and boxes on the counters.

Davis also sells other treasures she has gathered from around the world, such as Egyptian silk chenille scarves and vintage '30s advertising posters from China. "I carry things that I like," she says.

The beads start at 5 cents and rarely cost more than \$2, although Davis does have a "rather large chunk of Baltic amber" for \$30. She is happy to advise customers on selection.

Forbeadin' is open Tuesday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 4 p.m.

—Heidi Anderson

Ambiance
3985 24th St. (near Noe)
674-7144

One of San Francisco's most chic women's clothing stores has opened a sister store in Noe Valley. On Nov. 1, Ambiance quietly moved in and replaced Glad Rags, the popular clothing outlet that has thrived on 24th Street for decades.

Though Ambiance plans to keep some of the Glad Rags inventory, it will also fill the shop with its own style of threads.

"I call it 'Famously Romantic,'" says owner Donna O'Leary, in describing the frankly feminine look that has proved so successful at her original Ambiance, located on Haight Street. The lines she offers feature many knockoffs from the '20s, '30s, and '40s, including classy gabardine suits and long, slinky dresses trimmed with velvet and lace.

The garments range in price from about \$30 for a knit sweater to a couple of hundred dollars for evening wear.

Ambiance also carries handbags, hats, lingerie, new and vintage jewelry, and other accessories such as Art Deco silver flasks and cigarette cases.

"We are not a minimalist retailer. We believe in lots of stuff," O'Leary says.

She feels Ambiance will appeal to Noe Valley residents because "we are very customer oriented, and that's not a buzz word for us. We will take back sales goods, and we try never to say no."

Why did she choose Noe Valley for her second store? "This is the last truly San Francisco neighborhood. It's the real thing—the services, the loyal customers, and it's gorgeous!" says O'Leary. "Who wouldn't want to have a store here?"

Ambiance is open Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m.

—Heidi Anderson



The ambiance at Ambiance, which recently filled Glad Rags' spot on 24th Street, is both exotic and romantic. Photo by Charles Kennard

Shelley Clarkson's Body Therapy
1041 Guerrero St. (near 23rd)
282-1779

As we move into a stressful time of the year, Noe Valleyans can relax with the knowledge that another skilled pair of hands is available to soothe their knotted shoulders. Shelley Clarkson's Body Therapy offers traditional Swedish massage in an airy light-filled space at 1041 Guerrero (at 23rd Street). "My clients tell me it's relaxing just to be in here," she says.

Clarkson specializes in pregnancy massage and teaching infant massage to parents. She was listed in the 1999 *Bay Guardian's* Best of the Bay issue as the "Best Way for Pregnant Women to Relax."

"Pregnant women can really benefit from massage," says Clarkson. "In addition to improving body image and relieving aches and pains, massage increases your blood flow and circulation to promote easier delivery."

For working folks, Clarkson offers appointments a few evenings and every other Saturday. Prices for Swedish massage are \$60 for one hour and \$85 for 90 minutes. Corporate clients can schedule on-site chair massage for \$60 per hour with a two-hour minimum.

A Noe Valley resident, Clarkson says she enjoys working in the neighborhood, providing "a safe place for healing, so that people can relax deeply."

—Stephanie Rapp

B&H Television
Omega TV Repair
1791 Church St. (near 30th)
B&H: 401-9110
Omega TV: 826-0732

Omega TV has been a Noe Valley fixture since 1974, offering television, VCR, stereo, CD, and tape deck repair from its location on Church Street near the corner of 30th. It also serves as an RCA and General Electric authorized warranty station.

In September of this year, B&H Television moved into the Omega TV space. According to Omega partner Daniel Bennett, the two companies will operate independently under one roof and offer one-stop services to customers.

B&H specializes in videotape duplication and conversion to and from foreign formats. In addition, customers can rent or purchase multisystem VCRs.

According to owner Ernie Beck, Irish weddings are in big demand. Couples who marry here in San Francisco are converting their tapes to European format and sharing the wedding with relatives in Ireland. Swapping favorite television programs with foreign friends is another popular reason for using multisystem machines.

Prices range from \$15 for under one hour to \$20 for up to two hours. Multisystem machines sell for \$595; a weekend rental will cost you \$40. B&H also makes house calls and deliveries and will set up systems for customers upon request.

A professed Swedophile (he speaks Swedish and his wife is a Swede), owner Ernie Beck stocks 170 Swedish films for rental on the European PAL system.

After 30 years in West Portal, he is pleased with the move to Noe Valley. "The weather is a lot nicer here," Ernie notes. The only drawback to being in the neighborhood, he jokes, is that he is too close to Speckmann's beer.

Hours at B&H and Omega TV are Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

—Stephanie Rapp

Amberjack Sushi
1497 Church St. (near 27th)
920-1797

Noe Valley's newest fresh fish seaport, Amberjack Sushi, opened in October in the Church Street storefront vacated by What's for Dessert. (For those who don't know the term "Amberjack," it's an amber-colored fish found in temperate and tropical parts of the Atlantic.) The sleek, contemporary dining room, which seats 46, has a sushi bar and an open kitchen that allows diners to view what's going on during the preparation of their orders.

After 11 years of experience as a sushi chef, owner Stewart Kin-Heng is glad to be opening his own restaurant. "I wanted to show the California influence in my dishes," he says, pointing to the Citrus-Scented Hamachi and Tuna Tartare (\$10.50) and Tiger Prawn Stuffed Soft Shell Crab (\$8.95). The menu also boasts dessert items with a California flair, such as the Poached Pear in Mango Sauce (\$3.50).

But Kin-Heng hasn't neglected the flavor and atmosphere of traditional Japanese cuisine. Customers should note that his kitchen staff uses chopsticks instead of tongs when cooking.

And, of course, there's the sushi. Amberjack offers the staple *sashimi* (sliced raw fish), as well as *nigiri sushi* (fish over small rolls of rice), for \$10.50 or \$13 (for the "deluxe" serving).

Kin-Heng says he loves his new Noe Valley spot, across the street from Eric's Chinese Restaurant and the Fountain of Youth ice cream parlor. "The best thing about this neighborhood," he says, "is that it fits my restaurant concept perfectly. The people here are so friendly and they really appreciate good food."

Amberjack Sushi is open daily for lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., and for dinner from 5 to 9:30 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday dinner hours are until 10 p.m.

—Heidi Anderson



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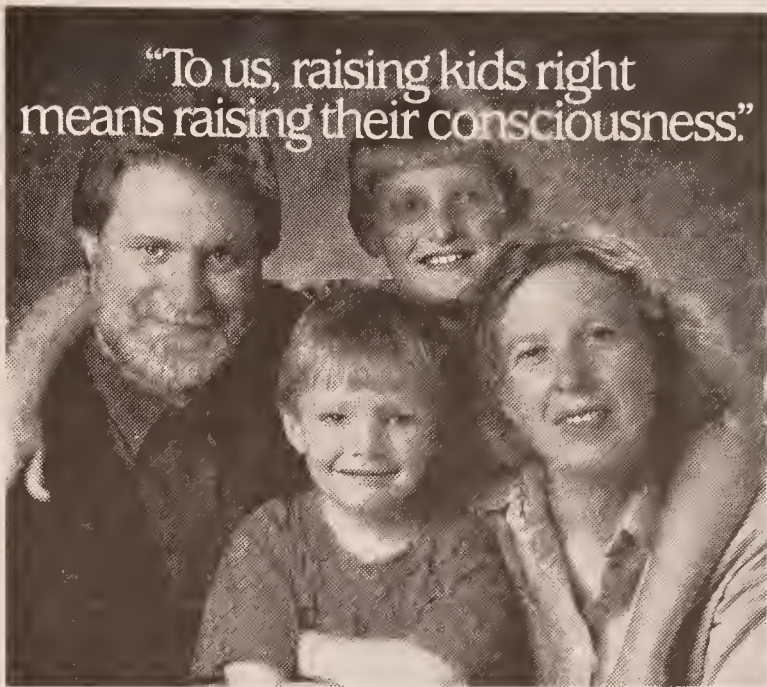
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SPECIAL CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

4:45 p.m. Family Candlelight Service

8:00 p.m. Candlelight Music Service

10:00 p.m. Communion Service



Saint Paul's Parish Christmas Schedule 1999

St. Paul's Parish Community warmly invites you and your family and friends to share with us the love that is Christmas.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14

7:00 pm: Communal Reconciliation and Individual Confession

CHRISTMAS EVE, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24

3:30 - 4:30 pm: Individual Confession

4:30 pm: Family Mass with Children's Choir

8:00 pm: Mass in English with Adult Choir

11:30 pm: Christmas Concert

12:00 Midnight: Bi-lingual Mass with Choir

CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25

8:00 & 9:15 am, 4:30 pm (English) • 10:45 am (Bi-lingual)

There will be no 12:15 pm Mass on December 25

NEW YEAR'S EVE MASSES, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1999

4:30 pm (English) • 10:00 pm (Spanish)

NEW YEAR'S DAY MASSES, SATURDAY, JANUARY 1, 2000

9:15 am (English)

SUNDAY, JANUARY 2, 2000

Regular Sunday Schedule

**221 Valley Street
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HOLY INNOCENTS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Annual Do-It-Yourself, Everyone Participate
Neighborhood Christmas Pageant
Wednesday, December 22 at 6:00 pm

CHRISTMAS EVE, Friday, December 24:

FAMILY SERVICE at 5:00 pm

A shorter service for families and children

FESTIVAL EUCHARIST at 11:00 pm

The formal service of Christmas. Carols by the Choir of Holy Innocents, 10:30 pm

CHRISTMAS DAY, Saturday, December 25:

Eucharist with Carols at 11:00 am

455 Fair Oaks Street, San Francisco, CA 94110 415-824-5142



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Presbyterian Church, USA

1021 Sanchez Street at 23rd Street 415-282-2317

Sunday Worship: 10:30 a.m. Childcare provided
Rev. Keenan C. Kelsey, Pastor

Advent

Theme:

The Quiet

Within

The Chaos

Community Carol Sing & Tree-Trimming
Wednesday, December 15, 7 p.m.

CHRISTMAS EVE Candlelight Service
Friday, December 24, 7 p.m.

CHRISTMAS Communion Celebration
Sunday, December 26 at 10:30 a.m.

NEW YEAR'S EVE Worship Service
Friday, December 31 at 7 p.m.



ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH

DIAMOND & ELIZABETH STREETS

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Christmas Services

Christmas Eve

Confessions, 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Family Mass at 5:00 PM and Midnight

Christmas Day

Masses: Same as on Sunday: 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM;
11:00 AM in Spanish at the Convent and 12:00 Noon

Come Home for Christmas!!

**Miss being with family for the holidays?
Come be a part of ours!**

Bethany Church: A Rainbow family of faith!

Community Christmas Concert and Dinner

December 19: Potluck dinner at 5pm—Concert at 6pm

Christmas Eve:

5pm: A service of wonder for the Child in all of us

11pm: Traditional Candlelight Service

Christmas Day Celebration and Lunch: 11am



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The Rev. Karen P. Oliveto, pastor • Phone/fax: 647-8393

e-mail: BethanyUMC@aol.com • <http://members.aol.com/bethanyum2/homepage.html>



DECEMBER 1999

DEC. 1: The Adventist HEALTH VAN offers free blood pressure testing and low-cost cholesterol screening. 10 am – 4 pm. Bell Market lot. 775-2570.

DEC. 1 – 11: ODC/San Francisco performs *The Velveteen Rabbit*, choreographed by K.T. Nelson, and narrated by Geoff Hoyle. Yerba Buena Center, 700 Howard St. 978-2787.

DEC. 1 – 12: MARGA GOMEZ performs her piece *Jaywalker*. Wed. – Sat., 8 pm; Sun. 7 pm. Theater Rhinoceros, 2926 16th St. 861-5079.

DEC. 1 – 15: "MILLENNIUM," a juried exhibition of new work by Bay Area artists, is on display at the City Arts Gallery at City College. 239-3157.

DEC. 1 & 8; JAN. 5, 12 & 19: The LAPSITS for infants and toddlers begin at 7 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

DEC. 1 – 23: An artists' HOLIDAY EXHIBITION at Gallery Luscombe features artistic gifts ranging from ceramics and jewelry to portable altars and voodoo love dolls. Reception Dec. 3, 6 – 8:30 pm.; gallery open Wed. – Sun., noon – 6 pm. 3040 24th St. 285-8545.

DEC. 1, 15 & 29: The Noe Valley Pet Company offers LOW-COST VACCINES for both cats and dogs. 6 – 7:30 pm. 1451 Church St. 282-7385.

DEC. 2: The Mechanics' Institute hosts a LECTURE and discussion: "The New Millennium: On the Edge of Apocalypse?" 6 pm. 57 Post St. 393-0114.

DEC. 2 – 19: A Traveling Jewish Theater performs *The Golden Bird*, song, dance, and PUPPETRY based on a Jewish fairy tale. Fri., 8 pm; Sat., 2 & 8 pm; Sun., 2 pm. 470 Florida St. 399-1809.

DEC. 3: Comedian GEOFF HOYLE teams up with friends to perform a humorous holiday show. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

DEC. 3 – 5 & 10 – 12: Shona Curley and Erika Shuch/The Beauty School split an evening of "DANCE, Drama, Drool, and Desire." Fri. – Sun., 8 pm. Dancers' Group Studio Theater, 3221 22nd St. 824-5044.

DEC. 4: Strybing Arboretum's Greens and Gifts HOLIDAY MARKETPLACE offers pottery, wreaths, herbal jams, and garden-related items. 10 am – 4 pm. Golden Gate Park. 661-1316.

DEC. 4: The Tse Chen Ling Center offers "Basic Introductory BUDDHISM" with Geshe Ngawang Dakpa. 10 am. 4 Joost Ave. 333-3261.

DEC. 4: The annual holiday CRAFTS FAIR at the Randall Museum features items for sale, demonstrations, Animal Story Hour (11:30 am), and an opera performance (2 pm). 199 Museum Way. 554-9600, ext. 33.

DEC. 4: Take a tour and meet the teachers at the Synergy School OPEN HOUSE (K – 8th grade). 11 am – 2 pm. 1387 Valencia St. 567-6177.

DEC. 4: A Little Elves' GIFT-MAKING WORKSHOP for children 6 to 12 (ages 3 to 5 with an adult) also features photos with Santa. Limited to the first 50 children. 1 – 3:30 pm. St. Aidan's, 5300 Diamond Heights Blvd. 285-9540.

DEC. 4: Jersey Street poet MICHAEL PALMER will be among those reading at Small Press Distribution's Gala Open House and Party, celebrating 30 years of literary leadership. 2 – 8 pm. 1341 7th St., Berkeley. (510) 524-1668, ext. 355.



Guitarist Peter Rowan will pick and sing with brothers Chris and Lorin during a "Reggae-billy Christmas" at the Noe Valley Music Series Dec. 18.

DEC. 4: The Golden Gate Boys Choir and Bell Ringers performs a CHRISTMAS CONCERT at St. Paul's Church. 7 pm. Church and Valley St. 648-7538.

DEC. 4 & 5: The San Francisco Lesbian and Gay Freedom Band presents the 1999 Dance-Along *NUTCRACKER*, which encourages audience participation. Sat., 7 pm; Sun., 2 and 7 pm. The Forum, Yerba Buena Gardens. 554-0402.

DEC. 4, 5 & 14: The Golden Gate MEN'S CHORUS performs a holiday concert. Sat. and Tues., 8 pm; Sun., 3 pm. St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, 3281 16th St. 476-5153.

DEC. 5: The Sivananda Yoga Center offers a free OPEN HOUSE featuring postures, breathing, relaxation, and meditation. 10:30 am. 1200 Arguello Blvd. 681-2731.

DEC. 5: The fourth annual "NAUGHTY SANTA'S Black Market" crafts fair benefits the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. 3 pm – midnight. SomArts Gallery, 934 Brannan St. 695-9100, ext. 2.

DEC. 5: Music on the Hill presents "MUSICK'S MUSE," 16th and 17th century vocal music. 7 pm. St. Kevin's Church, 704 Cortland Ave. 241-1515.

DEC. 6: El Mundo performs *Villancicos de Navidad*, baroque Christmas music from Spain and Central and South America. 4 pm. Noe Valley CHAMBER MUSIC Series, Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 333-9444.

DEC. 7: The Library Commission invites the public to address the proposed new schedule of LIBRARY OPEN HOURS at its December voting meeting. (Noe Valley Library would gain two hours.) 5:30 pm. Main Library, Koret Auditorium, 100 Larkin St. 557-4236.

DEC. 7: NATUROPATHIC doctor Victoria Hamman discusses the ideal diet for the midlife woman. 7 – 8:45 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

DEC. 7: "A Night with Evita," featuring live Latin music, tango dancing, and Argentinean cuisine, benefits the independent DOCUMENTARY FILM *La Señora Eva Peron*. 7 – 10 pm. El Rio, 3158 Mission St. 788-3408.

DEC. 7: Chris Carlsson introduces *Shaping San Francisco*, a multimedia exploration of the city's LOST HISTORY. 7:30 pm. Modern Times Bookstore, 888 Valencia St. 282-9246.

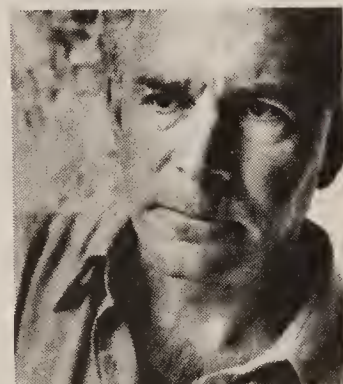
DEC. 7, 14 & 21; JAN. 4, 11, 18 & 25: HIP CITY JAZZ DANCE, led by Lauren Coleman, shakes up the building on Tuesdays at 6 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 282-2782.

DEC. 7 & JAN. 18: The Noe Valley Library hosts FILMS for preschoolers. 10 & 11 am. 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

DEC. 8: Tour St. Luke's new OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE facility from 4 to 6 pm. St. Luke's Hospital, 1580 Valencia St, Suite 301. RSVP to 641-6406.

DEC. 9: Upper Noe Neighbors hosts a HOLIDAY SOCIAL, an update on dogs in the park, and a discussion of a proposed homeless shelter for gay youth on Church Street. 7:30 pm. Upper Noe Rec Center, Day & Sanchez. 285-0473.

DEC. 10: A HOLIDAY SALE at Ruby's Clay Studio features both functional and sculptural ceramics by 25 artists. 6 to 9 pm. 552A Noe St. 558-9819.



Noe Valley poet Michael Palmer will be one of six featured readers at a 30th anniversary celebration for Small Press Distribution on Dec. 4.

DEC. 10 – 19: Goat Hall Productions performs Menotti's classic, *AMahl and the Night Visitors*. Fri. and Sat. 8 pm; Sun. 2 pm. 400 Missouri St. 289-6877.

DEC. 11: SANTA visits Noe Valley! Get in line for free photos, courtesy of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association. 10 am to 2 pm. Bank of America, Castro & 24th. 641-8687.

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JANUARY 2000



DEC. 11: The 10th annual Sparks Fly cultural event honors women **POLITICAL PRISONERS**. 7:30 pm. Mission Cultural Center, 2868 Mission St. 821-1155.

DEC. 11: The "Hey Klezmeh!" festival at the Noe Valley Music Series features the San Francisco **KLEZMER** Experience and Davka. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

DEC. 11 & 12: Explore the world of **MUSHROOMS** at the San Francisco Fungus Fair. Sat., 10 am – 5 pm; Sun., 11 am – 5 pm. County Fair Building, Golden Gate Park. 759-0495.

DEC. 12: The INA CHALIS Opera Ensemble performs *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, followed by a visit from Santa Claus. 11:30 am. Community Music Center, 544 Capp St. 647-6015.

DEC. 12: The ACLU's Bill of Rights Day honors poet **LAWRENCE FERLINGHETTI**. 2 pm. Argent Hotel, 50 Third St. 621-2493, ext. 346.

DEC. 14: Remember to **VOTE!** 7 am – 8 pm. Call 554-4385 for information.

DEC. 14 & 28; JAN. 25: Preschool **STORY TIME**, a read-aloud program for children 3 to 5, begins at 10 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

DEC. 15: **HOPALONG RESCUE** brings good dogs available for adoption or foster homes. Noon – 3 pm. In front of Zephyr Realty, 4040 24th St. Call Pali Boucher for information, 642-4786.

DEC. 18: The 3 for All **BASKETBALL** skills competition for girls 10 to 17 features the speed dribble, super shot, and free throw. 10 am – 2 pm. Sunset Rec Center, 2225 Lawton St. 753-7029.

DEC. 17 & 18: Giza Academy of Music and Legends of Dance presents the Academy Awards of **MIDDLE EASTERN DANCE** on video Friday at 7:30 pm, and a dance workshop taught by Jacques al Asmar of Lebanon on Saturday, 1 to 5 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 282-7910.

DEC. 18: The Older Women's League (OWL) hosts a **Y2K HOLIDAY POTLUCK** following their business meeting and election of board members. 10:30 am – 12:30 pm. Call 989-4422 for location.

DEC. 18: Christmas **CAROLERS** and musicians, sponsored by the Noe Valley Merchants Association, stroll along 24th Street. 11 am – 3 pm. 641-8687.

DEC. 18: **ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH** CHOIR and Musical Group perform a Christmas concert at 7:30 pm. 725 Diamond St. 826-4929.

DEC. 18: A **REGGAE** **BILLY CHRISTMAS** concert with Peter Rowan and the Rowan Brothers begins at 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

DEC. 19: **MYSTERY** author Mark Graham signs his Wilton McCleary novels, set in Philadelphia in the late 19th century. 2 to 3 pm. San Francisco Mystery Bookstore, 4175 24th St. 282-7444.

DEC. 19: Bethany Church hosts a community **CANDLELIGHT DINNER** and concert; turkey and ham provided, but bring a dish to share. Dinner 5 pm, concert at 7. 1268 Sanchez St. 647-8393.

DEC. 19 – 25: Help prepare **MEALS** for homeless people and deliver them to a shelter at St. Mary's. Bethany Church, 1268 Sanchez St. For info: 647-8393.

DEC. 21: A **HOLIDAY PARTY** at the Mission Branch Library features refreshments and crafts. 4 pm. 300 Bartlett St. 695-5090.

DEC. 24 & 25: A **CHRISTMAS EVE** pageant and service "for the child in all of us" begins at 5 pm; a traditional service of lessons and carols is at 11 pm. The Community Christmas Celebration Dec. 25, worship followed by a potluck brunch, begins at 11 am. Bethany Church, 1268 Sanchez St. 647-8393.

DEC. 29: **S.K. TOTH** performs "a different kind of concert" at 8 pm. Bethany Church, 1268 Sanchez St. 647-8393.

DEC. 31: Dance in the millennium at St. Paul's **DANCE OF 1,000 YEARS**, a benefit for the St. Paul's Preservation Fund featuring midnight champagne. 8 pm – 1 am. Parish Center. 648-7538.



Shea Whelan plays a poor boy who cannot walk in "Amahl and the Night Visitors," performed by Goat Hall Productions Dec. 10 – 12 on Potrero Hill. Photo by Richard Anderson.

DEC. 31: **NEW YEAR'S EVE** at the Integral Yoga Institute includes dinner, a service honoring major world spiritual traditions, chanting, and meditation. 8:30 pm – midnight. Call for reservations. 770 Dolores St. 821-1117

JAN. 8: Jane Underwood leads a free **WRITING JAM**, literary exercises to "jump-start your creative juices." 10 am – noon. The Writing Salon. 642-9793.

JAN. 8: The Terry Riley All-Stars with George Brooks and Tracy Silverman perform a **CONCERT**. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

JAN. 9: **SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING** classes start on Sundays, 6:15 to 7:45 pm. UCSF Recreation and Fitness Center, 500 Parnassus St. 476-1115.

JAN. 10 & 17: "YOGA of Death and Grieving" is a two-day workshop offered by the Integral Yoga Institute. 6 – 7:30 pm. 770 Dolores St. 821-1117.

JAN. 11: **RIBBONS THE CLOWN** will entertain preschool children with stories and magic. 10 and 11 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

JAN. 13 – FEB. 15: Noe Valley artist Tom Fowler exhibits **RECENT PAINTINGS**, drawings, and collages in his show, "Whipping Boy and the Seven Deadly Sins." Reception Jan. 13, 6 – 11 pm. Hours: Sat. & Sun., 1 – 5 pm; Thurs., 5 – 8 pm. Gallery Ad Magnum, 1252 Valencia St. 695-0119.

JAN. 14: **RAMBLIN' JACK ELLIOTT** sings folk songs at 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

Get Ready for 2000

and compose your press releases while you're relaxing over the holidays. The *Noe Valley Voice* will be resting from Y2K for a few days in January, but our next issue, stamped and dated February 2000, should be ready for public consumption by Feb. 3. The deadline to get in our calendar is **Jan. 15**.

You can mail your notices to the *Noe Valley Voice* at 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Or e-mail zabarska@aol.com.

For last-minute changes or questions, call Karol at 285-6347. Thanks for bringing us the news.

JAN. 15: The Noe Valley Music Series hosts an acoustic folk/pop concert by **BOX SET DUO**. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

JAN. 21: Columnist **ADAIR LARA** will sign her latest book at Cover to Cover. 7 pm. 3812 24th St. 282-8080.

JAN. 22: *Voice* contributor Janis Cooke Newman leads a **WRITING WORKSHOP**, "How to Get Published." 10 am – 4 pm. The Writing Salon. Call for location, 642-9793.

JAN. 22: In celebration of the Chinese New Year, **CHINESE LION DANCERS** perform at the Noe Valley Library. 5 pm. 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

JAN. 22: Noe Valley Music presents avant-classical music and jazz from the **TIN HAT TRIO**. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

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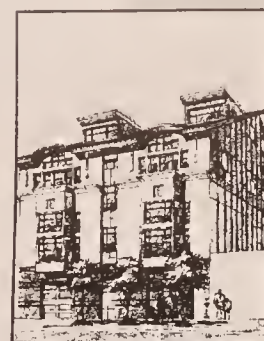


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Cranberry Ginger Pound Cake \$10.00
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• Glazed pumpkin cookies-these spicy domes are topped with icing for sweetness.

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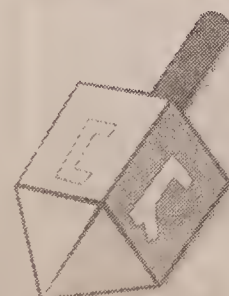
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Readers of Antiquity

Here are the last vintage travel photos in our *Voice* reader gallery for 1999. A fine lot—fit enough for a millennium party anywhere. Thanks for keeping us in touch, gang. Now who'll be first in for our February 2000 issue? Watch this space.



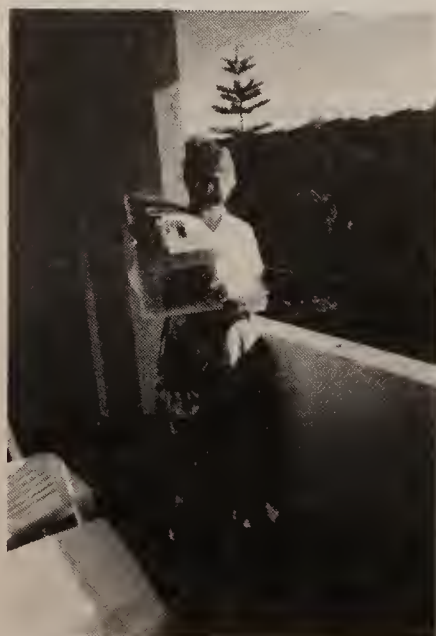
Vintage *Voice* readers Fred Lossman (standing), of Nevada City, and Norman Roddick, of DeKalb, Ill., have been pals since they attended kindergarten at Edison School in 1940.



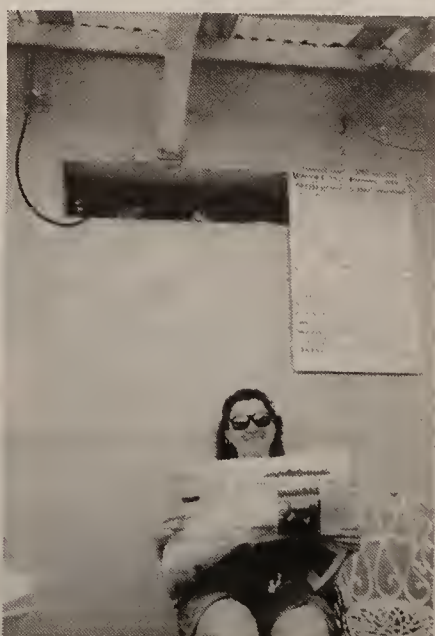
Voice distribution chief Misha Yagudin is never off duty. On his August trip to Kyrgyzstan, he was found seeking new subscribers among the tourists at Lake Issik Kul.



Simon and Ellen Pargeter of Diamond Street spent a week in St. Tropez, France, in October, satisfying their hunger for news and baguettes.



Clare Davis toured Mexico and the hotel spa in Ixtapan de la Sal with the gang from the Diamond Senior Center this fall.



Fran McDermott poses on the roof of her hotel in Cardel, Veracruz, Mexico. She was there to view what's called the largest concentration of migrating hawks, eagles, and falcons in the world—and to catch up on the *Voice*.



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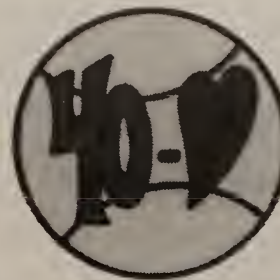
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More of the Last Readers



Emily Tilles trekked to Montreal in October with her favorite English-language newspaper in hand.

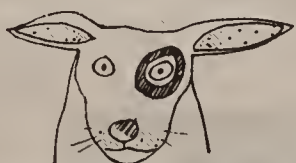


The Noe Valley Merchants-sponsored hayride in October ferried many Voice readers, including Supervisor Mark Leno (standing, at left) and Michael Glazer of Noe Valley Bakery.

Photo by Robert Roddick



Daniel Oppenheim and Julia Ten Eyck risk reading among the snowflakes at Stratford-on-Avon, U.K.



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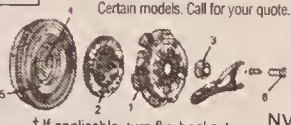
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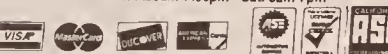
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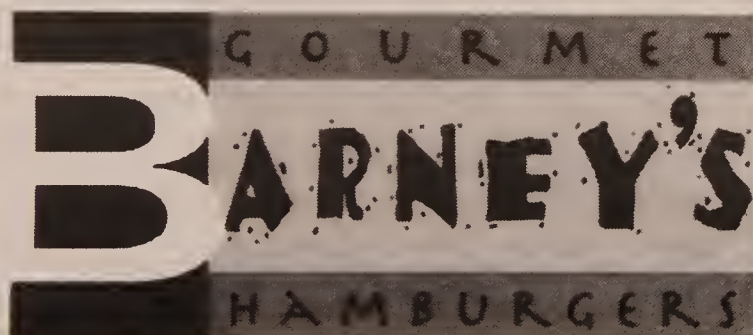
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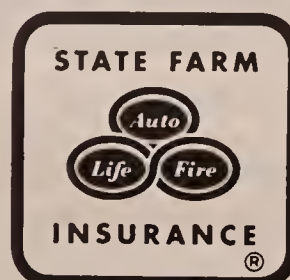
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Dreams for the 21st C.

By Betsy Bannerman

Clearly, people are focused on the upcoming millennium. It has spawned the Y2K fears and the wary wait for the next stock market crash. It's the reason we have all these 100-best-of-the-century lists, from films to athletes to sexy men. It may be the reason the *National Enquirer* is publishing stories about the end of the world and the Second Coming. People see something important, even symbolic, here.

On the "Time Line of the 20th Century"—the banner that hangs upstairs in the Noe Valley Ministry—my son and I have had fun after church, grabbing markers and scribbling in little milestones, such as the first snow-making machine, the first Zippo lighter, the first Crayolas (and when the pink crayon called "Flesh" finally bit the dust).

Other people have pored over the *Almanac* and written in the biggies, like the Depression, the drought, elections, wars. I didn't even know that there had been a plague outbreak in San Francisco after the '06 earthquake.

Many inclusions are personal (*Katie bought her first really cool automobile, 8-30-99*). Many have affected the whole world (*Adolph Hitler elected chancellor of Germany, 1933*). Lots are about endings—deaths, treaties, diseases that have been conquered. *Babe Ruth's last baseball game, 1935*.

And there are beginnings, too: births, marriages, incredible inventions. *Janet Reno, first woman to be named U.S. Attorney General, 1993*. There are events we all remember happening (*Beatles come to New York, 1965*), and ones we can't believe took so long to happen (*American Indians declared U.S. citizens by Act of Congress, 1924*).

I think of my grandmother who, in the first two decades of the 20th century, had six children, no car and no washing machine. My mother, in the 1940s, had four children, no disposable diapers, no dishwasher, and no television. And in the last decade of the 20th century, I have one child and I buy lettuce already washed, shredded, and packaged.

The man in the moon has become the men on the moon. Delivering the mail through rain, sleet, and hail has become instantaneous, anonymous e-mail.

For sure, it now takes less time and effort for us to do things than it did at the beginning of the century. And many of this century's inventions have been dramatically helpful. But in saving and improving people's lives, have we come any closer to understanding one another? Or have we become more lazy and careless about how we treat one another and the earth? What lessons—learned, and still to be learned—will we carry into the next 100 years?

One of the most intriguing parts of the Noe Valley Ministry's Time Line is the part after the 2000: "Dreaming Our Future." So far, the only writings there are "Joe Hill Never Died" and "Affordable housing, health care, and quality education." Good dreams.

Goodbye, 20th. Good luck, 21st. □

Betsy Bannerman lives with her 14-year-old son, Cody, on York Street.

Buy from the Little Guy

By J. P. Gillen

"Owner/Slave," *Little Italy Ristorante*

I own a small neighborhood restaurant—Little Italy on 24th Street, 20 years young. In addition, I was president of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association for six years.

I've learned over the years that our neighborhood's small business owners are truly fascinating individuals. They work extremely hard, trying to balance work and family. They almost always focus on the betterment of the community, and are generous to a fault.

Most important, they carry with them the local history and flavor of our ever-changing neighborhood. They create a rich hardy soup that is shared by the community and whose recipe is handed down through the ages. Losing them is like losing the trunk of photos in the attic. Wouldn't it be sad if you had no family history?

Another reason I shop at the corner store is because it is a rewarding personal experience. In this ever so hectic world, isn't it nice to be greeted by name? Isn't it nice to have a conversation with someone who expresses a genuine concern for you as an individual?

I also feel good knowing that any profit my purchases generate will go, for example, to Bill Shukri, the owner of 1001 Castro at the corner of Alvarado. His prices are reasonable. Sometimes they even beat the supermarket's.

If you obtain a San Francisco visitor's guide from the downtown convention bureau, you will see that one of the primary selling points of San Francisco is the diversity of its neighborhoods and the unique character they each maintain.

Now all the city neighborhoods are starting to look alike. Yuck.

While I do not possess the answer, I do possess the power to spend my money where I choose. I only wish the majority of my fellow consumers would support the independents. People's purchasing power would be reflected in the marketplace, and the problem of the big chain stores pushing out the little guy would solve itself.

It shouldn't be all dollars and cents. There must be some *sense*, too. □

Fuzzie Is Saved in a Daring Rescue!

By Susan Heit

Noe Valley resident (and petsitter)

Having lived in Noe Valley for 22 years, I've certainly noticed that this is a very dog-friendly neighborhood. You may have seen me at Manhattan Bagel most mornings with my rescue dog, Drake. He is the one waiting outside for his baby bagel!

Many of us cherish the companionship of our four-footed friends and perhaps do not realize that there are many animals in Bay Area shelters who are never given a chance for a good life. I have been a volunteer with the San Francisco Bay Area German Shepherd Rescue organization since January, and I wanted to share with my fellow Noe Valley residents a story about a dog named Fuzzie.

One afternoon last spring a man walked into the Stockton Animal Shelter to turn in his dog. He was told that owner-surrendered dogs are put to sleep within a very short time. Then one of our volunteers, working at the shelter, went with him to get the dog out of the car. To her surprise, the man opened the trunk of his car. There lay a small German shepherd with four puppies. Three of the pups did not make it and died. The fourth was taken and placed in a home by our rescue volunteer. She also took the mom dog, now named Fuzzie, to her home, where she was fostered for several weeks. In her new surroundings, Fuzzie had the company of many dogs, cats, and children. She got the care and attention she needed. She loved the children and was taught a special, gentle way to play with them.

Our rescue group made Fuzzie available for adoption, and in early April

adopted her to a family with two young girls, whom she now adores. The latest report on Fuzzie is that when the family took her on a camping trip, she got to go swimming for the first time. After an initial slow introduction to the water, she was so excited she began jumping in and chasing sticks and rocks the girls threw for her. Total fun for this happy dog! A dog that was going to meet an untimely end is now a companion, friend, and protector for her new family.

German Shepherd Rescue is a non-profit, volunteer organization which rescues German shepherd dogs from shelters throughout the Bay Area. They are given a medical exam, vaccinated, and neutered, and sometimes receive special medical attention. We place them with foster families, where we learn about them while giving them love and guidance before placing them with a new family.

We have many wonderful dogs. If you can help with a donation, provide a foster home, or volunteer with our group, please contact us!

Our hotline is 925-210-7466. Or you can e-mail us at LVartanian@aol.com.

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Meanwhile, I'll see you in front of the bagel shop. □



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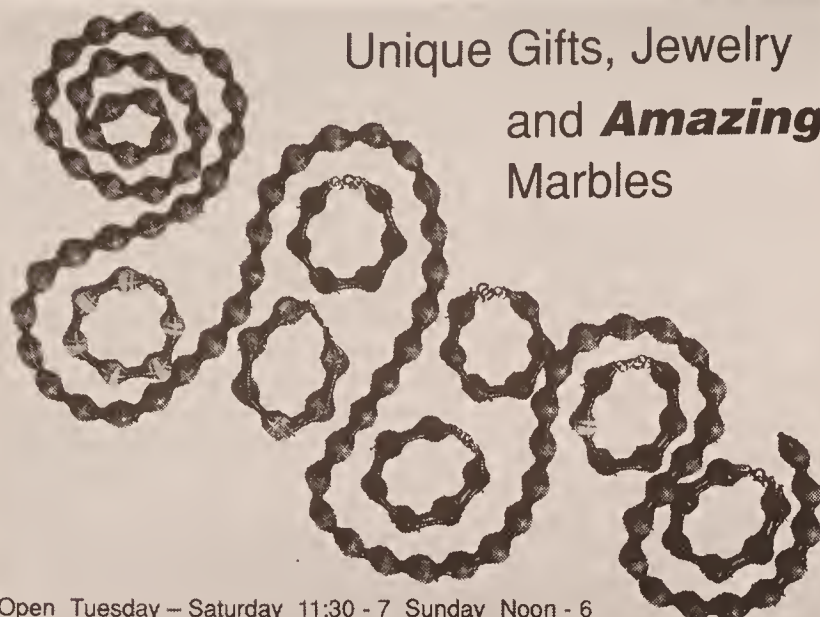
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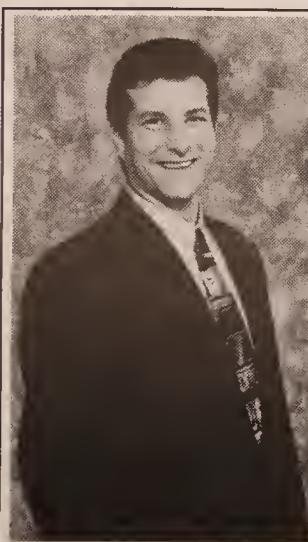
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Illustrated Reminiscences
by Florence Holub

A House with a Rich Past

When my family came to San Francisco from Idaho in 1925, we stayed for a short time in a house on 23rd Street owned by the Haglunds, members of the Swede-Finn colony of Noe Valley. Each morning, after my mother went out to search for living quarters for our family of five, I would run to the front window and wait for her to return. Hour after hour, I would peer out at the strange new world of San Francisco. Often my 6-year-old gaze would fall on an elaborate Victorian that sat directly across the street.

This stately manor—at 3780 23rd St.—seemed enormous compared to the plain, one-story farmhouse we'd left behind in rural Idaho. It was even bigger than our barn, I marveled. I wondered how many dozens of people lived there.

During those few days, I developed such an enduring fondness for the house that when I started doing illustrations for the *Noe Valley Voice* some 60 years later, I chose it as one of my first subjects. When the light was right and the weather was clear, I ambled down the hill (from my home on 21st Street) to record this lovely landmark with pencil and paper.

One day as I sketched, an old schoolmate, Esther (Reicks) Koch, happened by. She was especially interested in my drawing, she said, because she was on her way to visit her Uncle Alfred, who lived in that very house!

A conversation ensued, during which I learned that Esther had an even stronger family connection: her mother had grown up in the house. Though I had known Esther since grammar school, I had no idea of her Noe Valley roots.

Since that day on the street, whenever our paths have crossed, she has provided more interesting tidbits about her mother's house and the people who inhabited it.

The first owners of the house were the Schneider and Pracy families. The building was originally constructed in 1869 on a large parcel of land facing Church Street. Behind the house was a stable for the horses and a windmill with a water tower that was connected to a well on 24th Street.

Noe Valley was growing by leaps and bounds in those days, so in the 1890s the city decided to build the J-Church streetcar line to help transport residents to their jobs downtown. The new rail line required an enormous amount of street and earth to be excavated and hauled away. It also meant that the Schneider home had to be moved. In 1893, using jacks, blocks, timbers, and great caution, an able-bodied crew lifted up the entire house and carted it down the steep slope to the rear of the property between Church and Chattanooga streets. There it was placed on a new foundation facing 23rd Street.

In that abode, Nicholas Schneider and his wife, Mary Pracy Schneider, produced six children—two sons and four daughters.

Nicholas and George were the eldest, and when they were grown, they founded Schneider Brothers on Post Street—dealers in fine furs. (Remember, this was 1908—and it would be

many decades before furs became frowned upon.)

The youngest Schneider daughter, Charlotte, married a neighborhood gentleman, Alfred Girot, also a cutter in the fur business. The couple moved into the upper story of the 23rd Street house, while Charlotte's parents remained in the lower flat.

(Nicholas Schneider died not long after, but his widow, Mary, lived to be 93. After her death, the entire house passed on to Charlotte and Alfred Girot. But I'm getting ahead of myself.)

Charlotte's brother Nicholas lived not far away on Church Street in a fine Victorian (1117–1118 Church). He had daughters and no sons, so in the 1970s, after 75 years in business, he closed the doors of the Schneider Brothers furrier shop. He later moved to San Mateo.

Mary Schneider, the matriarch of this family, was very enterprising throughout her long life. It was she who with family assistance had a row of cottages built on the property facing Church Street (1081–1097 Church), as well as a large apartment house on the northwest corner of Church and 23rd streets.

Esther told me that her own mother came to the big house through an interesting set of circumstances. It just so happened that Esther's grandfather, Charles Hugo von Blossfeldt, had married a Schneider relative in Germany. Unfortunately, his wife died at a fairly young age, so Charles decided to come to San Francisco, where he met and married a woman named Katherine Esther Ross. He and his second wife had two daughters, Esther and Evelyn. Esther and Evelyn were only 14 and 12 when both parents died unexpectedly. (Sudden deaths like these—often caused by flu or pneumonia—were common in the days before antibiotics.)

The orphaned Esther was taken into the Schneider home because she and the



Schneiders' youngest daughter, Charlotte, were very close. Sadly, the family did not have room for Evelyn. However, she was lovingly welcomed into the home of a church couple, who had lost their own daughter in a fire. The sisters lived close to one another and were able to see each other often.

Esther left the big house when she married Henry Reicks, but they settled not far away in a flat above what is now Tully's, next to Bell Market. There in 1919, a daughter named Esther was born (my friend), and later christened at the Presbyterian church on Sanchez, now the Noe Valley Ministry.

The younger Esther and her cousin George Girot (Charlotte and Alfred's son) remember the magical Christmases they spent at the 23rd Street mansion. On Christmas Eve, trees on both floors of the house were trimmed with lit candles set in tiny saucers (to catch the melting wax). The candles were attached to each limb with a strong clamp, but very carefully so that the flame could not start a fire!

The little children were told they had to be good, because if they were bad, they would get only a lump of coal in the stockings the family hung by the chimney.



Noe Valley native Esther Koch (shown with daughter Esther) will celebrate her 80th birthday Dec. 12 at the Mark Hopkins Hotel, where she's spent many a happy evening dancing the rumba, waltz, fox-trot, and hula.

Photo by Leo Holub

When Esther was 5, she must have been very good, for she received a beautifully dressed 24-inch doll with a china head that had real hair and eyelashes, and lids that opened and closed. She still treasures that doll, named Charlotte Rosalie, after her favorite aunt, and although the doll is now 75 years old, she does not show her age.

Esther wears her years well too, perhaps because she has had such an interesting life.

She was always an excellent student. After high school, she went on to graduate from the old State College, located then at the intersection of Market and Laguna streets. Later, she received her master's degree in education at the new campus near Stonestown.

As a schoolteacher, she taught little kids during the day. But in the evenings she taught dancing to the big kids at the Arthur Murray Dancing School. This was back in the era when we all danced cheek to cheek. We also watched the Arthur Murray TV show, featuring dancers gliding gracefully around a ballroom to the theme song "Arthur Murray Taught Me Dancing in a Hurry."

That is what Esther did locally: she showed the not-so-leet-of-foot how to move like Fred and Ginger.

She began to dance as a teenager after a bout with rheumatic fever. To speed her recovery, her doctor prescribed a gentle form of exercise such as the Hawaiian hula.

Since that time, Esther has followed her doctor's orders diligently. In fact, she has danced her way through life!

In 1949 she married an engineer, George Koch, who was born and raised in a house on the corner of Elizabeth and Sanchez streets, across the street from the church where his future bride was christened. Small world, isn't it?

Fifty years later, Esther is still dancing. She wears a long skirt, not a grass skirt, and performs for groups in retirement and rest homes. Only last month she danced for her fellow residents in a large retirement complex in Millbrae.



We're looking forward to the birthday party, which should be a lively celebration. Perhaps Esther will perform her famous Hawaiian hula dance! □

P.S. About the house at 3780 23rd St.: Esther told me that it was sold in 1973, after her Uncle Alfred's death. Curious about the current occupants, I stopped by the house recently and knocked on the door. I was greeted by a very nice woman who said she and her husband—and three children—the Cutler family—were pleased to be living there now. They bought the house in 1983, and last month were busy repainting the exterior. Forgive the scaffolding, she said, the house will be beautiful soon!

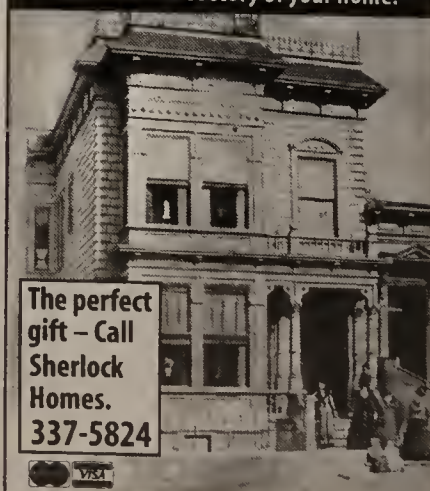


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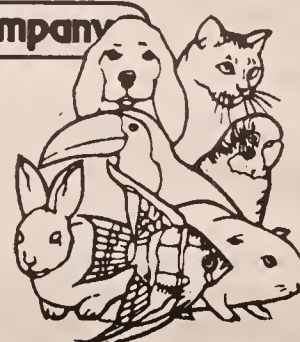
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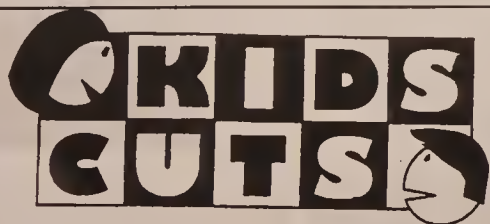
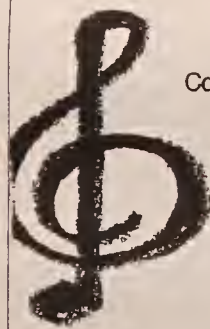
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NOE KIDS

Pokémon and Fortune Cookies: Exploring the Other Side of Chinatown

By Janis Cooke Newman

A woman in a padded silk jacket is sticking her tongue out at an elderly Chinese gentleman. The man places the tips of his fingers on her forearm and leans in closer so that her breath steams up his glasses. My 4-year-old son Alex and his friend Wesley stare in amazement.

"That man is a doctor," I tell the boys, "and this is some of the medicine he uses." I show them a display of dehydrated sea horses.

We are in the Tung Tai Ginseng Co. (1142 Grant Ave.), a small herb shop filled with ginseng roots shaped like little men, dried black mushrooms that resemble clods of dirt, and large flat pieces of white cuttlefish.

"Is that medicine, too?" asks Wesley, pointing to what appears to be a small dragon, flattened and mounted on a stick. "Yup," I tell him.

"Cool," he says. And I am enormously relieved.

"You always take us someplace boring," Alex has informed me on the way to pick up Wesley. "We want to do something interesting."

So I've brought them here to Chinatown, where I'm currently trying to keep them from licking the deer antlers that are supposed to increase virility.

The woman in the padded jacket has withdrawn her tongue and is now at the counter having her prescription filled by



Chinatown is exploding with Pop Pops and Picachu, but if you're lucky, your kids may get distracted by the tomatoes.

Photo by Ken Newman

an herbalist. Dried flowers, pieces of bark, and eucalyptus leaves are weighed on a hand-held scale balanced on a forefinger, and then piled onto small squares of pink paper. At the top of the pile, the herbalist places several dead bugs.

"What are those?" asks Alex.

The herbalist makes a clicking sound with his mouth.

"Cicadas?" I say.

He nods and gives each of the boys a packet of Haw Flakes, a plum-flavored candy.

Back out on Grant Street, we haven't gone 10 feet before Alex and Wesley spot a display of Pokémon cards. Pokémon pretty much rules on Grant Street. In every shop, the wooden back scratchers, sandalwood soaps, and meditation balls have been pushed aside to make way for Pokémon backpacks and baseball caps and plastic figures. I buy a key chain and a couple of cards, naively thinking this will prevent us from having to look at every piece of Pokémon merchandise on the street.

Tearing the boys away from the stores, we head up Jackson Street and cross over into unmarked Ross Alley to visit the Golden Gate Fortune Cookie Factory (27 Ross Alley). Just inside the door, a woman peels hot circles of cooked batter from a conveyor of little waffle irons. With one quick motion, she folds and bends the flat cookie around a metal bar and inserts the fortune. Another woman offers the boys a tin filled with flattened fortune cookies that look like full moons. They each take a couple, and I buy a bag of the folded ones for \$2.

We wander down Ross Alley eating fortune cookies and listening to the clacking of mah jong tiles coming from

behind basement windows. I read the boy's fortunes, narrow strips of paper that promise them great wealth and good luck in their personal affairs.

Cutting over to Waverly Place, we climb four flights of stairs to the Tin Hou Temple (125 Waverly Place). Inside, the air is smoky, and there's the sweet, spicy scent of incense. Alex and Wesley stare up at a ceiling covered with Chinese lanterns from which hang red prayer papers. Oranges are piled into little pyramids on several altars, lined along shallow shelves like candles in a cathedral.

"Can we eat these?" Alex asks. I stop him before he can remove one of the oranges from beneath the benevolent gaze of a serene Buddha.

"Why don't we have lunch?" I say, and the three of us go back down the stairs and out onto the street.

The restaurant is a couple of blocks down Grant Street, which gives Alex and Wesley plenty of opportunity to check out the rubber swords and toy handcuffs in front of the stores. I buy a notebook covered in Chinese silk (for less than \$2), and then pull Alex and Wesley away from a terrifyingly real-looking plastic AK47.

I take the boys to the Far East Café (631 Grant St.) because of the private booths. One side of this 1920s-era restaurant is lined with a row of wooden compartments, all with curtains that can be pulled over the doorway. Alex and Wesley adore these booths. While they wait for their chow fun noodles, they hide under the table and take turns pressing the (mercifully) broken button that's meant to summon the waiter. I like the privacy as well. The little wooden compartment means that I don't

have to keep reminding the boys to use their inside voices.

After lunch, we stop into the Chinatown Kite Shop (717 Grant St.), wandering among paper kites shaped like enormous dragonflies and long-finned koi. These elegant kites have absolutely no appeal for the boys, who are begging me to buy one covered with the bright yellow body of Picachu.

We walk back down Grant Street, lingering to play the little Chinese drums that work by twisting the handle and to roll those wooden massagers up and down our backs. It takes us half an hour to get to the corner. Eventually, I'm forced to buy a box of Pop Pops—the tiny paper packages that explode when you throw them on the sidewalk—to keep the boys moving, promising they can explode one when we get to the next block.

"C'mon," I shout to Alex, who has stopped to flip open a folding fan with birds painted on it and is now cooling off the back of Wesley's head. "We've got to get going."

"I can't," he tells me, putting the fan back and trying on a little round hat with a tassel on the top. "It's just too interesting."

Pleased, I crack open a fortune cookie, which promises me great peace in my old age. As the boys explode several Pop Pops around my ankles, I put the fortune in my pocket for safekeeping. □

Chinese New Year

This year, Chinese New Year falls on Feb. 5, 2000, but in Chinatown the celebrations will start nearly a month before. Throughout January, in preparation for the Year of the Dragon, the streets will be filled with vendors selling branches covered with pink blossoms, and packages of red-dyed seeds and nuts. Shopkeepers will paste red banners in their windows, meant to encourage good fortune and prosperity. And the streets will sound with staccato bursts of firecrackers exploding in storefronts to chase away evil spirits. On weekends, lion dancers hidden beneath giant papier-mâché heads will dance in and out of the shops on Grant and Stockton, giving kids a sampling of what to expect the night of the New Year's parade.



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MORE MOUTHS TO FEED

By Maire Farrington

Talya Aquinnah Pray-Weinstock

Talya Aquinnah Pray-Weinstock was 8 months old and weighed a mere 14 pounds when Laura Weinstock and Rachel Pray traveled to Yangjiang, in southeast China, to adopt her. After 4 months of paperwork and 10 months of waiting, the couple were thrilled to finally meet their daughter.

Although they knew the baby's Chinese name, Meina, and her weight, length, and age—she was born Sept. 1, 1997—they had no idea what she looked like until they arrived in China. The day before they met her, they were shown a photograph, along with a little footprint.

"That made us cry," Laura relates. "We just cried and cried." After the tears came another reaction: "She had big feet!"

"But she's growing into them now," Rachel points out. "It's like a puppy—they're not so big for her size anymore."

Talya has black hair with red highlights and dark brown eyes. She arrived in Noe Valley on June 3, 1998. Today, at 26 months of age, Talya is flourishing in her new home. She has a sunny disposition and gets along swimmingly with visitors. "She's always been like that," Rachel says. "She's totally social. She always likes it when there are a lot of people around. We had a baby-naming ceremony with 25 people a week after she got home. She went all the way around the room and everybody held her, and she thought it was great."

In Hebrew, Talya means "the angel who brought the sun from east to west," Laura explains. "Which we thought was so appropriate, since we did that."

Aquinnah is a Wampanoag Indian name for Gay Head, an area of Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts where Rachel's mother is buried. "Talya also means lamb, and my name, Rachel, means ewe," says her mom.

Laura, 39, and Rachel, 34, hit it off right away when they met in a Jewish lesbian social group in 1991. They lived in the lower Haight before buying their home on Dolores Street in 1995. They teach self-defense classes as part of their business, Womanpower. Rachel is also a poet, and Laura is a writer and nonpracticing attorney.

"When we met, we both felt that we had found the person we wanted to have kids with," Rachel says. "We found out about the different options, and it just made sense to adopt. And we liked the idea of adopting a little girl who was needing to be adopted purely because she was a girl."

"Ninety-nine percent of them are girls in China," Laura says of the babies available for adoption. "Sometimes when you have limited options, it's a blessing in disguise. Because we were two women, we couldn't adopt anywhere. We had to go to particular countries where we could adopt and where they wouldn't be suspicious."

There were other strings attached, too. "I was the petitioner as a single woman, because you had to be at least 35," Laura says. "Rachel and I went over there together, but we had to pretend that we were just friends."

In China, "you can adopt as a single woman, but obviously you can't be 'out,'" Rachel explains.

Talya's former residence was a "social welfare institute," a home for orphans, the elderly, and disabled. "Still, we think she got a lot of socialization, because there were a lot of people walking around," Laura says.

"They really care about kids there,"



Laura Weinstock (left) and Rachel Pray were thrilled to be able to adopt their baby girl from China last year. A ball of energy at 26 months, Talya Aquinnah Pray-Weinstock is vying to become lead singer in the family.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

Rachel remarks. "Everywhere we went, people would come up and say 'boo-boo' [the Chinese way of cooing to babies]."

"We call her the boo-boo as a result," Laura says. "We were in the bathroom, and all these women would gather around and watch us change her diaper. There was a little diaper rash and they got really upset. So I pulled out a tube of cream and pointed to it, and they got really happy."

Talya is being raised bilingual in Spanish and English, and when she landed in the States, she even knew a few words of Chinese. "Every time we put her in her crib, she'd say this thing that sounded like 'goy goy goy goy goy,'" Laura says. "When we'd ask a Chinese-speaking person what that meant, they didn't understand our pronunciation."

The mystery was solved when Talya accompanied her parents to the acupuncturist. "The acupuncturist wanted Talya to take a nap, and she said to her, 'Goy goy goy goy goy.' We were totally excited and asked her what it meant. She said, 'Sleepy.'"

Now Talya knows hundreds of words. "She's incredibly verbal. She'll repeat everything you say, and she imitates every inflection of your voice," Laura says. "It really makes you aware of how you sound."

She even repeats musical phrases. "She has perfect pitch," Rachel says. "You can sing a few notes to her, and she'll sing back the same notes."

Every Friday night, Talya participates in the lighting of the Shabbos candles (for the Sabbath) and singing over the candles, bread, and wine. She extends her hands for the blessing and joins right in. "She loves that," Laura says. "She totally knows the whole scene."

Talya also loves to dance and is partial to *Hava Nagila*, Sinead O'Connor, and Irish folk songs. She also likes to play the piano and flute, and when Laura brings out the guitar, she steals the pick and strums away while Mom fingers the chords.

Twice a month, Talya joins her parents for Buddhist meditation. "We took her to our *sangha* [community] and our *zendo* [the room where you sit], and she really liked it," Rachel says. "She liked the bell, and she bowed to the Buddha. 'Buddha' was one of her first words." When Talya went to hear a lecture by Thich Nhat Hanh, the first thing she said when she saw him was "Buddha."

Talya also enjoys family jaunts to the zoo, Baker Beach, and Day Street Park, where she is a hit with the Latina nannies, who talk to her in Spanish. And when she's out and about on 24th Street, "every time we pass Cover to Cover, the baby

yells 'Elmo, Elmo!'" Laura says. "A lot of times we don't get past the bookstore without going in so she can play in the playhouse with the giant Elmo."

At home, Talya likes to feed Kali, the family cat, and play with her toy trucks and draw pictures. She watches the Teletubbies and will sit and read picture books aloud. Lately, she's taken to reading the *New Yorker*. And bath time is always a treat. "Talya loves the water," Rachel says. "We took her to Hawaii, and she had an incredibly good time splashing around. In the China hotel, we gave her a bath, and she reacted like it was the most exciting thing. I think they had given them sponge baths [at the institute]. I don't think she'd ever been in a bath."

"I love how she considers us her mamas, and how she reaches for us and likes to snuggle and cuddle and sit on us," Laura says. "She's just so adorable. It's

really fun when we all hang out and don't have a big agenda. We just sort of watch her. We used to call it 'Baby TV.'"

"I never realized how much fun it was," Rachel says of being a parent. "It's so much fun to watch her learn and be excited about everything. And the bonding—it's an amazing thing to feel so connected." □

More Mouths to Feed wants to show off your newest family member. If you have welcomed a new baby into the house, or adopted a teenager, please send your announcement to the *Noe Valley Voice*, More Mouths to Feed, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Or e-mail us at jaxvoice@aol.com. We'd also appreciate a phone number, so we can arrange for the family portrait. □



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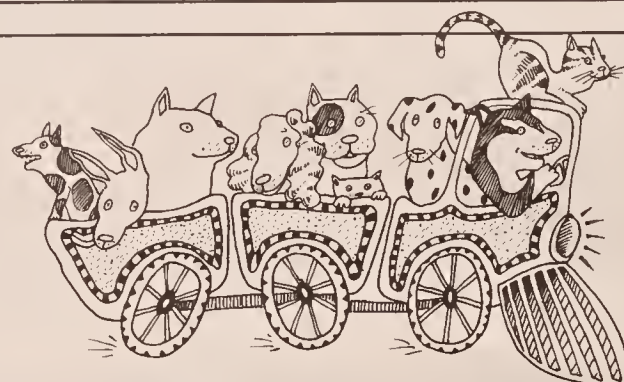
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Local Color Pages. Julia Ready tells the straight story to kids (left to right) Jackson, Annalise, Astra, and Gillian on the back deck of the Noe Valley Library. Photo by Pamela Gerard

BOOKS in our BRANCH

This month's new books list, provided by librarians Roberta Greifer and Carol Small, features chilling true crime by Ann Rule, the memoirs of violinist Isaac Stern, and, for children, a story of a balletophile wolf. To check out a book's availability, call 695-5095, or drop by the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library at 451 Jersey St. Besides books, the branch offers magazines, CDs, access to the Internet, and an index to the *Noe Valley Voice*. Hours are Tuesdays, 10 to 9; Wednesdays, 1 to 9; Thursdays, 10 to 6; Fridays, 1 to 6; and Saturdays, noon to 6.

Adult Fiction

◆ With a plot featuring secret Tibetan sects pursued by Chinese agents, *The Secret of Shambala*, by James Redfield, author of *The Celestine Prophecy*, takes us to new levels of awareness and spiritual truth.

◆ *Three Women*, by poet and novelist Marge Piercy, intertwines the lives of three generations of women.

◆ *War of the Rats* by David L. Robbins depicts the 1942 battle of Stalingrad, as experienced by two soldiers, one German and one Russian.



Adult Nonfiction

◆ *And Never Let Her Go* by Ann Rule reveals the story behind the 1996 disappearance of Ann Marie Fahey, the mistress of a powerful political lawyer.

◆ Taking us inside a contemporary monastic community, *In the Spirit of Happiness*, by the monks of New Skete, explores the question of what makes a life meaningful and how best to live it.

◆ In *My First 79 Years*, the great San Francisco violinist Isaac Stern, with help from Chaim Potok, shares his memories of a lifetime in music.

◆ Based on the author's discovery of explorer Padre Rivadeneira's diary 300 years later, *Shipwreck* by David Horner recounts the tragic shipwrecks of the *Capitana* and the *Maravillas* on their attempted voyages from Peru to Spain.

Annotations by Roberta Greifer

Films for Kids

◆ The library shows *films* for children ages 3 to 5 on Tuesday, Dec. 7, at 10 and 11 a.m.

Preschool Story Time

◆ Kids 3 to 5 are invited to the library's *preschool story time*, starting at 10 a.m. on Tuesdays, Dec. 14 and 28.

Children's Fiction

◆ *Trashy Town*, by Andrea Zimmerman and David Clemesha, is told in language that moves right along—just as Mr. Gilly does as he goes through his day of work. *Ages 2 to 4.*

◆ *Cook-a-Doodle-Do!* a concoction by Janet Stevens and Susan Stevens Crummel, is an action-packed story in which several friends collaborate on the making of a delicious dessert. *Ages 4 to 6.*

◆ A slightly mischievous wolf, originally hoping to have a plump pig for his dinner, instead becomes caught up in the excitement and drama of ballet in *Swine Lake*. Story by James Marshall, illustrated by Maurice Sendak. *Ages 5 to 8.*

◆ A boy in a Nigerian village describes the careers of several members of his extended family, but is particularly proud of his grandpa in *Grandfather's Work: A Traditional Healer in Nigeria*, written by Ifeome Onyefulu. *Ages 8 and up.*

◆ In Allen Say's *Tea with Milk*, Masako finds that she can include different aspects of her Japanese and American heritage in her life. *Ages 8 and up.*

◆ During the Depression, a father and son grow closer as they each reveal how they are helping the family in *The Babe and I*, by David A. Adler. *Ages 8 and up.*

◆ In *A Name on the Quilt: A Story of Remembrance* (by Jeannine Atkins), Lauren, her younger brother, and several other relatives share loving memories of Lauren's uncle, who has died of AIDS. *Ages 8 and up.*

◆ In *Bat 6*, a story about a girl's softball game, Virginia Euwer Wolff shows that feelings engendered during a war can erupt years after the war is over. *Ages 10 and up.*

Annotations by Carol Small

Infant and Toddler Lapsits

◆ You and your little ones can sing nursery rhymes and lullabies at the *lapsits* on Wednesdays, Dec. 1 and 8, at 7 p.m.

For other library events, call 557-4400 or visit the San Francisco Public Library's web site at <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us>.

It's really not a very crucial matter
which holiday it is that you're observing.
Sometimes it takes a bit of concentration...

Questions come conjunctive to the season
(the who-sits-where, gets-what or went-first-last kind)
that nuzzle at the fabric of the reason
for the sacred observations
for the special times of giving
for the love we share with friends and family.

... to focus on the things that really matter;
that what we serve means less than that we're serving,
and why is this an annual revelation?

All the things we should or do hold dearly
(the clutched-to-heart, the truths and cherished fictions)
shine brightest these days, beacons upheld yearly
like the candles in menorahs
like the seven lights of Kwanzaa
like the star that sits atop the Christmas tree.

What really is a very crucial matter:
these holidays all have some thing deserving
of everyone's respect and admiration.

—MARK EZARIK, 1996

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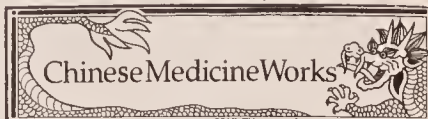
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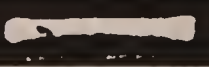
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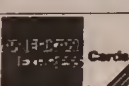
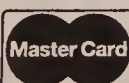
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Advocates for Upper Noe Rec Center

Contact: Greg Clark, 719-8828
Mailing Address: Call Greg Clark for info.
Meetings: First Tuesday of month, in the auditorium at Upper Noe Rec Center, Day & Sanchez, 7 p.m.

Castro Area Planning + Action

Contact: Linton Stables, 541-0344, ext. 230; capa@home4us.org
Meetings: Second Thursday of month, Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

Cesar Chavez Neighborhood Association

Contact: Ed White, 774-3237
Mailing Address: First Church of God, 3728 Cesar Chavez St., San Francisco, CA 94110
Meetings: Last Thursday of month, First Church of God, 7:30 p.m.

Diamond Heights Community Association

Contact: Robert Dockendorff, 826-3867
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 31529, San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: First Thursday of month, 7:30 p.m. Call for location.

Dolores Heights Improvement Club

Contact: Amy Powell, 647-4228
Mailing Address: 3732 21st St., San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Bimonthly; membership meetings semi-annually. Call for details.

Duncan Newburg Association (DNA)

Contact: Evelyn Martin, 826-6734; Keith Eickman, 282-8988; Dennis Downing, 647-0937; or Deanna Mooney, 821-4045
Mailing Address: 560 Duncan St., San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Held periodically. Call for details.

East & West of Castro Street Improvement Club

Contact: Paul Kantus, 647-3753
Mailing Address: 492 Douglass St., San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: First Wednesday of month, Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., 7:30 p.m. Call for summer holiday schedule.

Eureka Valley Promotion Association

Contact: Lion Barnett, 255-3624
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 14137, San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Third Thursday (except July, August, and December), Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7 p.m.

Fair Oaks Neighbors

Contact: Paul Nixon, 647-5183
Mailing Address: 163 Fair Oaks St., San Francisco, CA 94110
Meetings: Call for details.

Fairmount Neighborhood Association

Contact: Susan Nutter, 285-8484
Mailing Address: 78 Harper St., San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Held periodically at Upper Noe Recreation Center, Day & Sanchez, 7 p.m.



Friends of Glen Canyon Park

Contact: Richard Craib, 648-0862
Mailing Address: 140 Turquoise Way, San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Third Wednesday of the month, Glen Park Recreation Center, 7:30 p.m.

Friends of Noe Valley

Contact: Harry Stern, 821-1086, or harrystern@aol.com
Mailing Address: 327 Jersey St., San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Second Thursday of month, Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., 7:45 p.m.

Liberty Hill Neighborhood Association

Contact: Katherine Pietrycha, president: Katherine.Pietrycha@wcom.com
Mailing Address: 3288 21st St., Box 44, San Francisco, CA 94110
Meetings: Executive board meets first Tuesday of month; general meetings quarterly. Call for details.

Noe Courts Coalition

Contact: Dr. Tom Mills, secretary.
Voicemail: 675-0110; nichapin@aol.com.
Mailing Address: Noe Courts Coalition, P.O. Box 460520, San Francisco, CA 94146
Meetings: Irregular. Call for information.

Noe Valley Democratic Club

Contact: Dave Monks, 821-4087
Mailing Address: 1652 Dolores St. #6, San Francisco, CA 94110
Meetings: Second Wednesday of month, 7 p.m. Call for location.

Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association

Contact: Robert Roddick, 641-8692
Mailing Address: Robert T. Roddick, Noe Valley Law Offices, P.O. Box 460574, San Francisco, CA 94114-6003
Meetings: Last Wednesday of month, Bank of America, 24th & Castro, 9 a.m.

Noe Valley Neighborhood Parks Improvement Association

Contact: Debra Niemann, 641-4934, or Krista Keegan, 550-9050
Mailing Address: 4171 23rd St., San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Held periodically. Call for details.

Outer Noe Valley Merchants

Contact: Jim Appenrodt, 641-1500
Mailing Address: 294 29th St., San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: First Monday of month, St. Paul's Church cafeteria, 3 p.m. Call to confirm.

Upper Noe Neighbors

Contact: Vicki Rosen, 285-0473
Mailing Address: 169 Valley St., San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Fourth Thursday of month, Upper Noe Rec Center, Day & Sanchez, 7:30 p.m.

La Leche League of San Francisco

Contact: Thalia DeWolf, 641-8366
Mailing Address: 47 Costa St., San Francisco, CA 94110
Meetings: First Tuesday of month, Bernal Heights Library, Cortland & Moultrie, 10:15 a.m.

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Noe Valley Psychologist describes his work in the fall issue of *Common Ground*, on page 118. Elliott Isenberg, Ph.D. 695-0499.

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Meditation Workshops. These are practical workshops that will enable you to begin earnest meditation on your own. A clear understanding of what meditation is, how it works, and how to make it an enjoyable daily experience will be presented. Tuesdays, Dec. 7 and Jan. 11, 6 to 7:30 p.m. \$8 each. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. 415-821-1117.

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Yoga of Death & Grieving Workshop. The science of yoga can help us accept our mortality, teaching us how to stay focused on our eternal Self. In this two-day workshop we examine how this awareness can enhance our lives and look at methods for coping with the deep pain that comes with the death of a loved one. Mondays, Jan. 10 and 17, 6 to 7:30 p.m. \$16. Please register in advance. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. 415-821-1117.

Hip City Jazz Dance at the Noe Valley Ministry. Tuesdays at 6 p.m., intermediate level. Meet people, learn moves, and be hip! Call Lauren at 282-2782.

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Ayurvedic Cooking Class. Come prepare and enjoy a delicious Ayurvedic vegetarian meal using the tridosas and a winter menu. We will look at the basic body types and foods appropriate for each. Participants will create a meal of tea, grains, vegetable dishes, and dessert. Sunday, Dec. 5, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. \$35. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. 415-821-1117.

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Furniture Wanted. I need old and antique dressers, tables, desks, etc. Any condition. Paying cash. Karen, 647-6157.

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Four Week Prenatal Yoga Course. Yoga stretches, breathing practices, and deep relaxation can assist you in maintaining an easeful, peaceful, and joyful pregnancy. Please call Elizabeth at 931-7291 to register for this course one week in advance. Four Thursdays beginning Dec. 2, 6 to 7:30 p.m. \$32. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. 415-821-1117.

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Drop-In Prenatal. Yoga stretches, breathing practices, and deep relaxation can assist you in maintaining an easeful, peaceful, and joyful pregnancy and birth. Thursdays beginning Jan. 6, 6 to 7:30 p.m., \$8. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. 415-821-1117.

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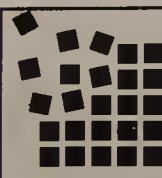
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Winter Solstice Puja. This will be a devotional service, asking for blessings as we enter the time of inwardness and meditation. This will lead into our noon meditation. Tuesday, Dec. 21, 11:30 a.m. to 12:40 p.m. By donation. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. 415-821-1117.

Too Many Papers? Too Little Time? Call Margo Rila, 861-4551. Home and office organizer. Reasonable rates. References. www.margo.byetwright.com.

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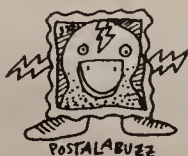
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Those Old Tinsel Christmas Decorations ought to remind us of the first December each of us spent in Noe Valley. Yes, those glitzy trees on the poles are old and threadbare...but shouldn't we cherish the tattered artifacts of our neighborhood's past? Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa—it's all so much more than decor and shopping. So have a merry, a happy, a wonderful, and a real good. And in the new millennium: kick off your shoes and bare your sole!

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The Scoop on Class Ads

IT'S EASY. Just type or print the text of your ad, multiply the number of words by **30¢ A WORD**, and send us a check or money order for the total amount. (Note that a phone number, including area code, counts as just one word.)

Then mail your ad copy and check, made out to the *Noe Valley Voice*, so that we receive it by the **15TH OF THE MONTH** before the month you'd like to advertise in. The address is *Noe Valley Voice* Class Ads, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114.

10 FOR 10 DISCOUNT: The *Noe Valley Voice* publishes a news edition 10 months a year. (We're on vacation in January and August.) If you place the *same* class ad in 10 issues, you are entitled to a 10 percent discount. To figure your cost, deduct 10 percent from the total amount due for 10 issues.

The next *Noe Valley Voice* will be the February 2000 issue, distributed in Noe Valley Feb. 3. **THE DEADLINE FOR CLASS ADS IS JAN. 15, 2000.**

Sorry, the *Voice* is unable to accept Class Ads by phone or e-mail at this time. But there's one consolation: The ads are displayed on our web site at no extra charge: www.noevalleyvoice.com.

Class advertisers should keep in mind that only the first few words of the ad (not to exceed one line of type) will be set in bold. Also, receipts and tear sheets will be provided only if your order is accompanied by an SASE. Thank you. □

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Holiday Sublet. Charming, sunny, one-bedroom apartment, Dec. 13 through Jan. 12. 641-0578.



Words Wanted: The *Noe Valley Voice* welcomes submissions of poems, stories, and essays, particularly those with neighborhood themes. Payment upon publication. Send manuscript and self-addressed, stamped envelope, plus name and phone, to the *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114.



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Each month the Class Ads and top news stories and columns are posted on our web site. www.noevalleyvoice.com

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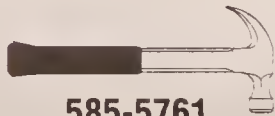
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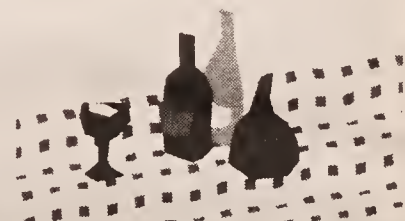
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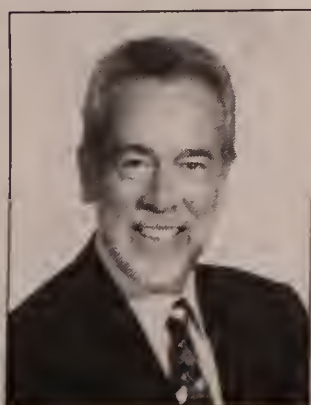
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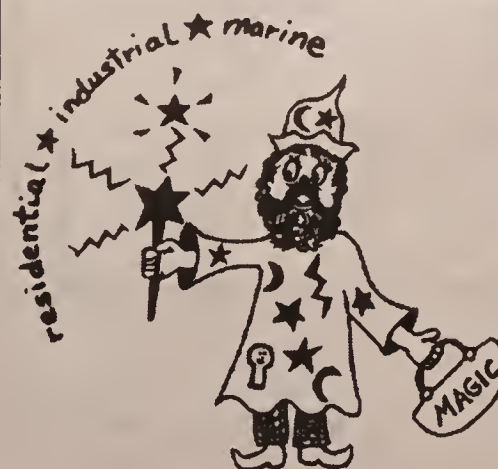
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and now for the RUMORS behind the news

Quoth the Raven, 'Nevermore'

By Mazook

THE RAT AND RAVEN is no more. In early November, the doors were shut and a notice posted in the front window announcing a change of ownership.

As many of you know, the popular bar has been a fixture in Downtown Noe Valley (4054 24th St.) for ages. It was the crowded drinking establishment called Finnegan's Wake in the 1970s and early '80s. (The *Noe Valley Voice* was conceived on those hallowed premises.) Then it briefly became Noebody's Inn, and then the Rat and Raven for the past decade.

Well, the most recent owner, Horst Grahlman, was murdered in his Russian River digs (he also ran a bar up there) a couple of years ago. It took a while, but evidently his estate has now been settled, and the building and business sold.

The new owner, whose name is Sparkie ("I have only one name, like Prince"), says he is painting and cleaning the place and that he plans to keep it a bar. But he has no set date to reopen. "I am in no big hurry," he says.

Sparkie is no stranger to the bar business: he owns the Lucky 13 bar over the hill on Market Street, and he has another Lucky 13 on the island of Alameda.

He doesn't know what he will be calling his new drinking establishment, he says, but he's sure it won't be Lucky 13.

☎ ☎ ☎

A YMCA IN OUR VILLAGE, PEOPLE? That item in the Friends of Noe Valley newsletter reporting that the YMCA was scouting a site in Noe Valley, "near the intersection of Clipper and Noe streets," got a lot of Noe Valleons talking last month.

According to Andrew Scott, executive director of the Mission YMCA, the organization wants to relocate the Mission Y, which has been in cramped quarters on Mission Street near Bosworth since 1953, to a new and larger building.

"We are presently looking to build a major facility on Castro Street between Clipper and 25th, on what is now the upper yard of James Lick Middle School," says Scott, "and obviously we would do so only if we got the support we needed from the neighborhood."

Scott points out that the Mission Y has been serving the southeast quadrant of San Francisco for over a hundred years—since 1883. As for a move to Noe Valley, "it might be a long process, but we think that a facility with a gym, pool, fitness center, senior services, and child-care center would be welcomed by the community." Scott also indicated that the Y would build an underground parking garage to accommodate members, employees, and others using the facility.

Scott says the YMCA has worked with the S.F. Unified School District before, and knows that a plan involving the James Lick campus is feasible.

Over the next year we should see Judy Martens—Mission Y's senior services director and a Noe Valley resident—making the rounds of the neighborhood groups, checking our (aerobic) pulse on the issue.

"We want the community to work with us," says Scott. If you want to reach either Andy or Judy, call the Mission YMCA at 586-6900.

☎ ☎ ☎

THAT PICKET LINE in front of Isa's Beauty Salon in mid-November was staged by the San Francisco Tenants Union. The protesters were targeting owner Isa Muhawieh, who is allegedly trying to evict two seniors in a four-unit building on Lexington Street, through the so-called Ellis Act (where a landlord removes all units in a building from the rental market).

Attempts to reach Isa were unsuccessful, and I was told that the dispute was "in litigation" and I should talk to his lawyer. My calls to his lawyer have not been returned. But Ted Gullicksen of the Tenants Union confirmed that his group was behind the 24th Street protest. Ted also said the SFTU planned to picket Isa's shop again in December.

☎ ☎ ☎

SCOTTISH AUTHOR (and creator of kid wizards) J.K. Rowling signed a thousand copies of her *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* in the 2 hours and 20 minutes she spent at Cover to Cover on Saturday morning, Oct. 30. "And every kid got one of those sweet looks—she was amazing," says a delighted Nicky Salan, owner of the 24th Street bookstore.

The workers at Happy Donuts across the street told Nicky that the line for the book signing started at 1:30 a.m. on Friday night, when a family who had driven up from L.A. bedded down at the door.

A few days later, Nicky recounted the story as a guest on KQED's radio show "Forum." She also gave her picks for the best reads in children's literature. Frank Baum's *Oz* books—about another wizard—made Nicky's Top 10 list. Drop by the store and she'll reveal the rest.

☎ ☎ ☎

NOE VALLEY PROTECTIONISTS appeared at the East & West of Castro Club's Nov. 3 meeting and sounded the alarm

about legislation that Supervisor Mark Leno is proposing. Leno, who lives on Clipper Street, wants the city to allow greater housing density along Muni's busy transit routes, such as 24th Street. His proposed law, intended to make room for more people, would raise the building height limits from 40 to 50 feet, and would free some developers from having to provide off-street parking. The theory is that residents who live along these corridors wouldn't need cars since they'd have public transportation at their doorstep.

But as Harry Stern puts it in the November Friends of Noe Valley newsletter, less per-capita parking is "going to be a tough sell in Noe Valley."

Paul Kantus of the East & West Club is already raising a ruckus: "Aren't our streets short enough on parking spaces now?" he writes in his group's newsletter. "Mr. Leno seems to think that people will ride the Muni and *not need cars!* Mr. Leno, Noe Valley (and most other neighborhood districts serviced by Muni) is *not* Manhattan!... We do not have the people-moving transportation system that New York has, where many residents do not even own cars. Most single-family residences [here] have more than one car, with only one off-street space.... And another 10 feet added to building height limits means another floor of the house with more people and no off-street parking! This sounds like very poor thinking. What happened to preserving the unique characteristics of our neighborhoods?"

☎ ☎ ☎

SPEAKING OF UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS, we can thank the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association for those new red holiday banners adorning the light poles on 24th Street. We've al-

Continued on Next Page

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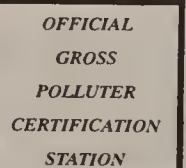
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RUMORS

Continued from Previous Page

ready received a few favorable comments at the Voice office.

One reader wrote: "I'm quite enjoying the merchants' new Christmas banners along 24th Street. Coming out of Pasta Pomodoro last night, I encountered one that had fallen to the ground, so I returned it to the restaurant—I know how much those merchants are pinching their pennies for those decorations!"

The Merchants have also sprung for Santa and friends, who will visit the Bank of America (24th and Castro) on Saturday, Dec. 11, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. There will be free photos and goodies for the kids. Then on the following Saturday (Dec. 18), from 11 to 3, holiday carolers and musicians will stroll through Downtown Noe Valley.

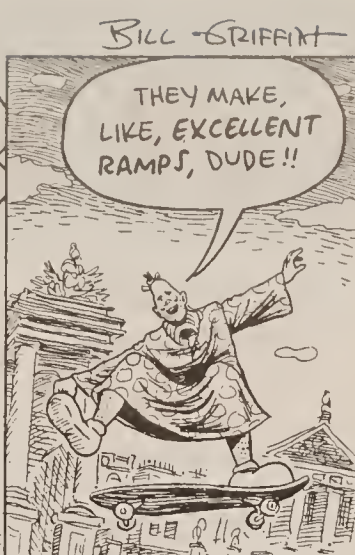
In the association's last newsletter, President Bob Roddick thanked the members for their enthusiasm during the year.

Bob also wrote that due partly to their efforts, Noe Valley is becoming "a special neighborhood ... where natives, residents, fellow San Franciscans, immigrants, new arrivals, and tourists come together to visit, shop, relax, and sightsee. 'Noe Valley' is

ZIPPY



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being noticed.... Even the morning weather channel highlights the temperature in a special box for Noe Valley. Of course, our temperature is always the best in the city. *The sun is always shining in Noe Valley.*"

Let's hope it shines with or without parking.

☎☎☎

SHORT SHRIFTS: Say goodbye to Homes of Charm, which is closing after more than 20 years on the corner of Church and Duncan streets. The owners are moving to England. No word yet on what's going in in its place.

However, the news about the storefront on Church near 28th, formerly occupied by Cash and Carry Beauty Supply, is that it's being remodeled to become a consignment furniture store.

Tom Maravilla, co-owner of Mikey-Tom Market on Church Street, is being urged by the Glen Park Neighborhood Association to open a MikeyTom Two in the grocery store space at Diamond and Chenery, where Diamond Super (and Terry's Meats) used to be. The Glen Park store—which Tom says is two to three times the square footage of his current storefront in Noe Valley—was burned out a year ago and is now being remodeled. Tom says he is negotiating with the building's new owners and that things look promising. "I think it would be great to apply all the stuff we've learned here in

Noe Valley," he says. Not to worry, though. He and partner Mikey will still run their flagship, MikeyTom on Church.

Surprise—the Pigeon Lady's house (at 1329 Sanchez) is on the market again. You all remember when she put it up for sale two years ago for \$199K, sold it for \$241K, then flew off to Estonia. Well, the new owners are selling it. Last month, the price tag for the refurbished 2 bedroom, 1½ bath (with patio and hot tub), was \$529,000. Feathers included.

☎☎☎

SPEAKING OF SQUABBLING—no, not really—the Noe Valley Democratic Club had a protracted November meeting, and wound up endorsing Tom Ammiano for mayor in the Dec. 14 runoff. The club had made no mayoral endorsement in the Nov. 2 election.

This time around, the Demos decided not to make an endorsement in the district attorney's race (Hallinan vs. Fazio). In the last one, they endorsed Matt Gonzalez.

I know I promised you local election results, but at press time the San Francisco Department of Elections had yet to tabulate the final vote count because of the historic Ammiano write-in.

I'll get to it next month—uh, next year.

That reminds me: The Department of Elections, formerly the Registrar of Voters, is now faced with setting up next year's district elections for the Board of Supervisors, otherwise known as the Balkanization of San Francisco. We are in District 8, which consists of (from north to south) Eureka Valley, Upper Market, Noe Valley, Fairmount, Diamond Heights, and Glen Park.

☎☎☎

BEFORE LEAVING city government, congratulations are in order for Noe Val-leon Mary Counihan, who was the winner of a Public Managerial Excellence

Award (one of five) given by an advisory council to Mayor Brown. She works for the Department of Human Services as a manager in Adult Protective Services.

In her award citation, Mary was described as "the driving force" behind new state legislation that will increase funding (\$45 million) for adults who are at risk of physical abuse, mental illness, and neglect—often the elderly. She also helped train staff to operate a new 24-hour adult abuse hotline in San Francisco.

☎☎☎

THE NOE VALLEY MINISTRY needed a 24-hour hotline to field all the calls about jazz-rock star Rickie Lee Jones, who performed at the church Nov. 26–27. She sold out her four shows (two shows a night) within nanoseconds of the \$38 tickets going on sale. As her many fans know, Jones has won two Grammys and twice appeared on the cover of *Rolling Stone*.

The show was produced by Slim's nightclub. Why'd they choose the Ministry? According to Tracey Buck of Slim's, Rickie Lee "specifically asked for this venue, because she wanted to perform in more intimate surroundings."

The Ministry comfortably seats 200. Regulars of the Noe Valley Music Series, who used to flock to see Bobby McFerrin there in the '80s, know just how cozy that chapel can get. But let's see, if we added 10 feet to the steeple...

By the way, the next hot ticket at the Ministry is Dec. 3, when comedian (and Noe Val-leon) Geoff Hoyle will perform at the Music Series. Geoff will depart the following day for the Big Apple, where he'll do *Revelers* on Broadway.

☎☎☎

THAT'S ENOUGH REVELING for this century, folks. Onward toward the millennium, 2001. You all have a merry, happy, and safe Y2K. □

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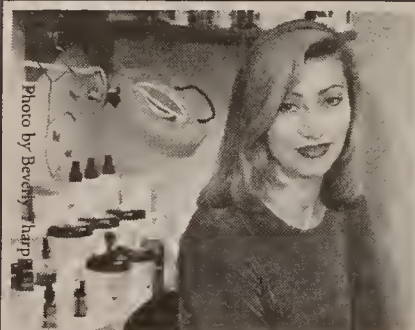
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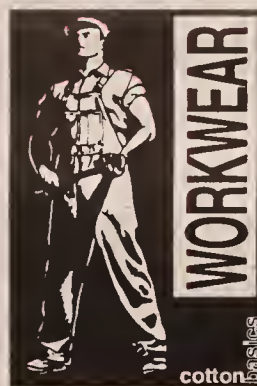
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A Perfect Day

◆ BY BILL YARD ◆

I MADE IT AS FAR as 24th and Valencia, one block from BART, just minutes from my usual ergonomically designed, temperature-controlled perch on the 18th floor of a steel and glass Beale Street cage.

Then I stopped. Look, I said to myself, it's happening again: another morning, another perfectly fine day, is turning into a *workday*.

Witnessing an otherwise fine and fulsome morning devolve irretrievably into just another drab slab of commerce, compromise, and petty politics is ... well, it's the opposite of watching some crusty cocoon unzip from within to free a delicate, gorgeous butterfly. Rather, that sweet fine San Francisco morning is suddenly and methodically eviscerated, bursting *Alien*-like into a slime-encrusted workday, devoid of vision and stinking to high heaven of trivial toil and banal greed.

You know the routine. You awake from a priceless and improbable dream, one filled perhaps with vague conspiracies, or suspended laws of architecture, or compulsively craven coitus with an insignificant other. That lurking demon, the clock radio (you didn't own one when you were young, did you?), has loosed its caterwaul, prodding you toward the daily money-Mecca cattle call. The noise yanks you up and out of your dream. For a moment you lie on the bed, blinking. Your body extends from your mind in a gooey mass, like egg white draped limply around a yoke.

A trained donkey could perform my morning ritual. If my life were an Excel file, I'd write a macro. Stumble to bathroom, shower, shave, breakfast, dress... Once in a while (today!), I get to the front door before realizing that I must momentarily rush back, because I forgot that most ridiculous, absurd, and demeaning device of all: the necktie.

Some time ago I ran into my good friend, the guru and carpenter known as George Morey, sitting on the bench outside Spinelli's (what is it now, Tully's? Whatever). I said, "Hey, George. How's work?" He looked down, shook his head, and muttered, "Time-consuming." Indeed, work becomes this defiling of time, each incident only a petty crime. But over the

years, over a lifetime, our silent whoring reveals its true horror: we are worn down, eaten from within, drained of stamina, laughter, creativity. I read the other day that, in general, the more "advanced" a civilization is, the less leisure time it has. Do folks like me go to work to make money to buy — what — ties, alarm clocks, Fast Passes, auto insurance, Pentiums, all so we can *go to work*?

So there I am at 24th and San Jose. And the crime is not just what I have done to get there, but what I have not done.

Take fog: I have, once again, neglected it. Surely among the city's most valuable assets, the fog blesses many parts of town (Noe Valley more than most). Standing on a corner along any of our numbered streets or those parallel to them, facing west, you watch it coming over Twin Peaks. Through the years, you notice subtle differences in the fog during different seasons. In late fall and early winter, the fog's at its best.

That's because of the light that illuminates the fog during its morning and evening journeys back and forth from the sea. After the autumnal equinox, as the sun struggles to cross the sky, the morning fog glows from within in this low-slung sunlight. And watching the fog fighting Twin Peaks to the west, with the morning sun on our backs, we sometimes get that crisp, post-sprinkle sparkle from moist asphalt streets that lick passing car tires like big black dog tongues. You have to stand and face west, during late fall or early winter, to pick this up. I say, you have to *stand there*, and notice. And exhale, and be patient. And listen.

And you can't do that, or you won't, if you're going to work.

There are whole classes of people who don't work. Of course, there are the homeless. Most "working" folks just run right past them, so that they can run into the BART station, run down the stairs, run past the street musician, run past the *Chronicle* stand, run past the *Watchtower* vendor, run to the turnstiles, run to the escalator, run down the escalator, and run to their defacto slots on the platform. And for what? To wait, and often wait some more, for the train. Inside, they sit, silent, steaming, semi-digested, a few eyes alive and flitting among them to settle on someone and feed, until the mass forced extrusions at Powell, Montgomery, or the Embarcadero.

The homeless, meanwhile, don't run. Rather, they tend to talk to people (if only to themselves) and look around (at fog, or us). Retirees don't run either, nor do the folks (mostly women) pushing baby carriages (babies! Now there's a concept! Having a baby used to be almost written permission to spend much of the day outside, doing errands, breathing the fog! These days, unfortunately...), nor do young semi-employed students, and artists and poets and dancers and laborers and drunks and cabdrivers and—you know, all the people who bring life and vitality and true economic and cultural diversity and patience and perspective to our town, and fewer and fewer of whom can afford to live here anymore. Which is why, in 1979, downtown 24th Street between Church and Castro was pretty much equally busy at 10 a.m. seven days a week, whereas the same strip in 1999 is relatively quiet at 10 on weekdays before exploding into yuppie Calcutta at 10 on weekends, the inmates having been forced to pound out license plates (or web sites—whatever) until Friday night when they're finally let out into the exercise yard.

Oh, and there's a lot more to it than the fog. There's always something to read, the *Chronicle*, *Bay Guardian*, doesn't matter. To do it right, you read most or all of whatever it is. How about a novel? Read it all, or a bunch of it, at one sitting. Gorge on it. If

it's a newspaper, you leave it on your seat for the next guy. And you're chasing it with coffee, of course, but

coffee in a *ceramic container*, which is how coffee is supposed to be drunk, not in some disposable cardboard tube so it tastes like you're sucking your coffee through a box. To do it the right way, you have to stay put in the cafe. Sit. Stay.

Through the window, you see a pigeon. You watch it. You notice that it's picking up a twig, then it lifts off and disappears under the eave of a set of flats across the street. The pigeon is building a nest! This is where baby pigeons come from! Epiphany! *Now* we're getting somewhere!

You walk down the street and somebody on one of the benches outside Starbucks says something amusing and you stop and smile and say something else and you both laugh. You, and a complete stranger. He (or she — whatever!) says something else, and you reply, and lo and behold the conversation catches. You want to cup your hands around it so the wind doesn't blow it out. Maybe you exchange names. Maybe you don't.

This ... this transaction, it's civilized. It's called community. It's called learning about people who are different from you without having to look them up in a book

THE LAST PAGE

The Noe Valley Voice invites you to submit fiction, literary nonfiction, or poetry for publication on The Last Page. Please mail manuscripts, which should be no more than 1,200 words, to the Noe Valley Voice, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Don't forget to include a phone number, and an SASE if you want your manuscript returned. We look forward to hearing from you.

or, God forbid, search their web site or, Goddess forbid, take a seminar at New College about them. It's just *being* with them. Quiet, patient, open-ended, wondering, both of you smelling the same morning air, watching the bakery trucks unloading, the fearless kids on skateboards, the door of the 48 dilating at the corner. Being with strangers, as well as friends.

This is how fear and ignorance and prejudice are stopped in their tracks. This is how children learn tolerance and courtesy and respect. A Christian might witness, in this transaction, the sharing of a dollop of the Holy Spirit; a secular observer might sense the cobbling together of a small corner of democracy. Both would agree: this is good stuff. We crave it, more than the newest CD, the safest baby stroller, or the subtlest stain for our hardwood floors.

It reminds us. On those mornings when we're going to work, or on those precious few mornings when we're not going to work but we're busy catching up from going to work, we miss it, this actual living. All of it.

I miss it. Any of it. I can't go back to 1979, when I only worked a few hours here or there (just like, it seemed, everybody else), and we all survived just fine, thank you very much, and we learned stuff like fog, and smells, and talking to strangers, and in a weird sense, we even enjoyed doing the laundry, because we didn't own our own machines back then, so we went to a (public!) laundromat, clutching an airtight alibi to hang on the street.

BUT BACK TO THIS 1999 day, this perfectly fine, anonymous morning. I don't have to walk that last block, go down into that BART tube, let the economy's peristalsis extrude me toward that perch in that glass and steel Beale Street cage. I'll take back this one day.

At 24th and Valencia, I stopped. A block from BART, I turned around and started to remove my tie. I began to walk. ◆

Bill Yard is a writer and editor who has lived in San Francisco since 1971. He can be reached at byandlc@earthlink.net.



Noe Valley in the Last Days of the 20th Century

Photo by Beverly Tharp